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ABSTRACT

This study examines the existing secondary education structures of the European Union member nations, the organization of education, teacher training, and the way in which secondary education is managed in Europe today. The three European Free Trade Association/European Economic Area (EFTA/EEC) countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) also are included in the study. The four chapters aim to facilitate an approach to the various issues confronting secondary education in the countries. Chapter 1 addresses the structure of secondary education, situates it within the education systems as a whole, and looks at the various branches and pupil mobility within the systems. Chapter 2 deals with the internal organization of secondary schools and aims to describe and compare the situation in various countries in terms of the way school time is organized, the subjects taught, and the types of assessment and certification used. This chapter also deals with pedagogical approaches to combating school failure. Chapter 3 focuses specifically on initial teacher training for secondary education. Chapter 4, on administration, addresses decision-making and gauges the extent to which this has devolved to regional and local levels, as well as to individual schools themselves, in areas such as the planning, structure and educational organization of secondary education and the management of teaching staff. (EH)

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Secondary Education in the European Union:* Structures, Organisation and Administration

1997

* This study also covers the EFTA/EEA countries.

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European Unit of EURYDICE
Rue d'Arlon 15
B-1050 Brussels
Tel. : 32-2-238.30.11
Fax : 32-2-230.65.62
E-mail: EURYDICE.UEE@euronet.be

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Foreword

At the end of the twentieth century, secondary education in Europe is still confronted with some very basic challenges in relation to the education and development of young people. At the present time, this is no longer so much a matter of democratising access to this level of education as of adapting its content and the methods used in schools. Since the development of mass secondary education in many European countries from the beginning of the 1970s, the groups involved have never been so heterogeneous and the education systems have had to face the need to find the means to ensure equality of opportunity and of success for all young people. Moreover, technological change brings new needs and new demands for qualifications which put schools under increasing pressure, more particularly at secondary level. These problems are at the centre of the many discussions taking place in the world of education at both national and European level.

So as to produce a reliable comparative study on the way this education is organised, the EURYDICE network has taken the existing literature on the subject as its starting point, in particular the first draft of an analysis carried out for the European Commission in 1995 by the Lumière University of Lyon in France. Using this analysis as a basis, the network has done considerable work to guarantee the accuracy and reliability of the data, fill in missing information and especially enrich the report with as much relevant information as possible. The aspects studied cover the existing education structures, the organisation of education, teacher training, and finally the way in which secondary education is managed in Europe nowadays. The three EFTA/EEA[1] countries have also been included in the study.

An analysis of the same type dealing with primary education was carried out by EURYDICE in 1994. The task proved much more complex for the secondary level. With the multiplicity of branches and optional subjects as well as the various patterns of administration found in education at this level, it is not easy to describe each national situation and put it into a comparative context both reliably and without oversimplification. We hope we have been equal to this challenge and trust that the reader will find this study useful in helping to identify the place of secondary education in each education system and to provide a better understanding of how it works.

We should like to thank the National Units in the EURYDICE network for the essential contribution they have made towards the reliability of the national information used and the overall quality of this study.

Luce Pépin
Head of the European Unit
of EURYDICE

June 1997

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[1] Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are participating in the Eurydice Network under Agreement on the European Economic Area.

Introduction

At the beginning of this century, the task of describing the institutional and educational functioning of secondary education structures in Europe would undoubtedly have been less complex and less redoubtable than today. At that time, secondary education consisted primarily of a collection of institutions whose aim was to prepare pupils for universities and which provided an essentially arts education reserved for a social elite. Secondary education was an easy subject to tackle for any researcher in comparative education, for two reasons. First, it had an educational and social function that could be identified clearly within each country and, second, the systems in different countries were largely similar.

How can we today use the same terms of reference to study educational structures which not only differ sharply from one country to the next but are also liable to changes in boundaries within a single country, depending on which government is in power and which educational reform is adopted? How is it possible to fully grasp a concept of secondary education that is evolving in line with the construction of Europe? Formerly, in the Europe of the Twelve, primary schooling was clearly separate from secondary schooling that was divided into lower and upper stages. The accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden – and the influence of EFTA countries such as Iceland and Norway – have served to make less of an exception of the structure of the Danish *folkeskole*, a single school which provides continuous education for children from age 7 to 16 or 17. The initially very marked distinction between primary and secondary education has today become rather blurred.

Any attempt to define secondary education and identify its structures thus implies making certain choices. For example, should we include those short post-primary structures which do not lead to education for pupils up to the age of 18 as part of secondary schooling? In countries where pupils are streamed into different types of education at the end of the primary school, transition mechanisms have been provided to postpone final selection and encourage pupil mobility between the various types of education. It is therefore impossible to exclude post-primary and pre-vocational education from the secondary sector because this would fail to take into account the widespread efforts made to bridge the gaps between the separate school career paths and to cater for the needs of socially and educationally diverse groups.

Finally, virtually all countries have introduced measures to raise the status of vocational education. These often take the form of establishing equivalence between technical and general qualifications or the accreditation of work experience for those wishing to resume their studies. These efforts are bringing down the final barrier which once clearly separated vocational training from more general education.

Over the past century everything has become more complex. Compulsory schooling was introduced and has been extended almost everywhere in Europe, so that it no longer means primary education plus supplementary courses. Now pupils cannot legally leave school until they have completed lower secondary education or even part of upper secondary education. Secondly, the democratisation of education which has become so pronounced during the second half of this century has opened the door to secondary education for social classes which had previously been excluded. Finally, technological changes and the growth in the service sector now require a higher level of education, and people can no longer content themselves as they once did with a more rudimentary vocational education. In this way, demographic, social, economic and political changes have combined to make new demands on secondary education. No area of secondary education – whether it be structures, the organisation of education or teacher training – is left untouched.

Indeed, the past three decades have radically transformed the definition of secondary education which had gradually evolved over a period of time. Today secondary schooling involves the great majority of young people. What impact will this development have on the administration and funding of secondary education? How will its structure enable it to respond to the new demands being imposed on it? What changes will there be in the way education is run? In short, how will the secondary education systems in each country rise to these new challenges?

The following four chapters aim to facilitate an approach to these various issues.

The first chapter addresses the structure of secondary education, situates it within the education systems as a whole, and looks at the various branches and pupil mobility within the systems.

The second chapter deals with the internal organisation of secondary schools. It aims to describe and compare the situation in the various countries in terms of the way school time is organised, the subjects taught and the types of assessment and certification used. This chapter also deals with pedagogical approaches to combating school failure.

The third chapter focuses specifically on initial teacher training for secondary education.

The final chapter on administration addresses decision-making and gauges the extent to which this has been devolved to regional and local levels, as well as to individual schools themselves, in areas such as the planning, structure and educational organisation of secondary education and the management of teaching staff.

I – Structural organisation

1. The place of secondary education within the education system

In this chapter, **diagrams** will help to illustrate secondary education structures in each of the 15 Member States of the European Union[2] and the three EFTA/EEA countries which are participating in the activities of Eurydice under the Agreement on the European Economic Area. In these diagrams, a distinction is drawn as far as possible between upper and lower secondary education, the various types of education, the transition from one type or stage of education to another and further education and career options. Primary education and higher education are represented in white on the diagrams in order to clarify the position of secondary education within the system as a whole.

A first reading of these diagrams allows us to group countries together according to how they organise lower secondary schooling and the transition from lower to upper secondary education.

In Denmark, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Norway, the term 'secondary education' covers only that part of schooling which in the other countries is considered as upper secondary education. Lower secondary education does not exist as such. Indeed, in these six countries, basic education is organised in a single structure. Consequently, **throughout this study, the last phase of the single educational structure in these six countries is considered as lower secondary education**.[3]

In Greece, France and Italy, the two stages of secondary education are provided in separate schools. The first stage is said to be 'integrated' in that all pupils follow an identical general curriculum at the *Gymnasio*, *Collège* or *Scuola Media* respectively. At upper secondary level, various types of education are on offer to pupils who choose their school according to the type of education they wish to follow.

A third group of countries share the same aim of giving all pupils basic education during lower secondary schooling. These core skills are known as *socles de compétence* for pupils up to age 14 in the French Community of Belgium, as *gemeenschappelijke basisvorming* in the Flemish Community of Belgium, compulsory secondary education in Spain, the Junior Cycle Curriculum in Ireland, the National Curriculum in England and Wales and the Northern Ireland Curriculum in Northern Ireland. Pupils switching to vocational education may be required to change institutions at the end of lower secondary education.

In Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, all pupils also receive a general education at the lower secondary stage and there are common programmes in the early years across different types of school – the *Orientierungsstufe* in Germany and *Basisvorming* in the Netherlands. Some types of school are restricted to the lower secondary stage while others provide both lower and upper secondary education. Luxembourg defines two types of education from the beginning of secondary education, the *lycée général* and the *lycée technique*.

With respect to mobility between general and vocational education, indicated by arrows on the diagrams, in most countries it is possible to switch between types of education during the course of secondary schooling. The diagrams only indicate opportunities for switching between types of education and the reader should consult the tables accompanying each diagram in order to discover under what conditions this is possible (Tables 9 to 29).

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[2] The Belgian education system is represented by two diagrams (one for the French and German-speaking Communities and the other for the Flemish Community). It is likely that in the coming years the education system of the German-speaking Community will tend to diverge from that of the French Community. The United Kingdom has three separate education systems, in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, each of which has its own diagram.

[3] In order to facilitate comparison between countries, the various types of national education system have been grouped according to the levels defined in the International Standard Classification for Education (ISCED). However, when making international comparisons, it is important to consider the numerous differences that exist between the national systems of education and training. Furthermore, the ISCED no longer appears to cover adequately structural changes in the various systems. The ISCED is currently being reviewed and should be available in its new form within the next few years. Meanwhile, we follow Eurostat (1995), taking the beginning of lower secondary education (ISCED 2) in the single structure to be the year in which the majority of pupils reach age 13 in Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Norway, and the beginning of the 'third stage' of *ensino básico* in Portugal.

These tables are drawn up on a country-by-country basis and for each type of school, referred to in the language of the country. They specify the levels of education, the objectives pursued, the duration of compulsory schooling, the theoretical starting and finishing ages, the certificates awarded, the available career and further education options, and whether education is full- or part-time.

1.1. Objectives

Objectives can be divided into two major categories according to whether the secondary school system offers general or vocational education.

During the lower secondary stage, the objective of general education in all countries is to provide broad-based education that is wide-ranging and balanced and enables pupils to make considered decisions regarding their future. Compulsory education in Spain sets itself the additional objective of preparing pupils to enter employment.

In most countries, the upper secondary stage of general education is aimed mainly at further studies in higher education.

The objective of vocational education generally is to prepare young people to enter employment and to practise an occupation. However, most countries also mention in their objectives the importance of general education in parallel to technical education in order to give skilled young people the option of continuing their studies.

1.2. Duration

The duration of lower secondary education ranges from two years in Belgium[4] to five or six years in Germany. In most countries, the lower secondary stage lasts three or four years.

Table 1. Duration of lower secondary education, 1995/96

2 years	Belgium
3 years	Denmark (from the 7th to the 9th year of *folkeskole* + a possible 10th year), Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands (first level HAVO, first level VWO), Portugal (third stage of *ensino básico*), Finland (*Peruskoulu grundskola* upper stage), Sweden (last three years of the *Grundskola*), England, Wales, and Northern Ireland (ages 11-14), Iceland (years 8 to 10 of *Grunnskóli*), Norway (years 7 to 9 of *Grunnskole*[5])
4 years	Spain, France, Netherlands (VBO, MAVO), Austria, Scotland, Liechtenstein
5 years	Germany (courses of education leading to the *Hauptschulabschluß* qualification)
6 years	Germany (courses of education leading to the *Realschulabschluß* certificate and the upper secondary *gymnasiale Oberstufe*)

In upper secondary education, there is also a wide variation in the duration of courses in both general and vocational education. A possible explanation for such variations may be that countries wish to offer pupils the opportunity of gaining extra qualifications within secondary education itself.

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[4] In Belgium there are three stages of secondary education, each of two years. The first stage is considered as lower secondary education.

[5] From 1997, years 8 to 10.

Table 2. Duration of upper secondary general education, 1995/96

2 years	Denmark (HF course based on 10th year of the *folkeskole)*. Germany (some *Länder)*. Spain. Ireland. Netherlands (HAVO). England. Wales. Northern Ireland (GCSE). Scotland
3 years	Denmark *(Gymnasium*. HHX. HTX). Germany (most *Länder*[6]*)*. Greece. France. Ireland (with a transition year). Italy *(Scuola magistrale)*. Netherlands (VWO). Portugal. Finland (± 1 year). Sweden. Norway
4 years	Belgium (+ a possible extra year). Italy *(Istituto magistrale. Liceo artistico* – both + a possible extra year). Luxembourg. Austria (the *Polytechnischer Lehrgang* lasts only one year). England. Wales. Northern Ireland (GCE A level/AS examinations). Iceland *(stúdentspróf)*. Liechtenstein *(Gymnasium)*
5 years	Italy *(Liceo classico. Liceo scientifico)*

Table 3. Duration of upper secondary vocational education, 1995/96

2 years	Germany *(Berufsfachschule* between 1 and 3 years. *Fachoberschule)*. Spain (between 1 and 2 years). Greece (TES). France (+ 2 possible extra years). Ireland. Netherlands (short MBO. first level apprenticeship). Finland (from 2 to 3 years depending on the occupational field). the United Kingdom[7] (England. Wales and Northern Ireland: follows 2 years in upper secondary general education; and Scotland: + 1 possible extra year)
3 years	Denmark (vocational education and training). Germany (vocational education in the *Berufsschule* and on-the-job training: 'dual system'). Greece (TEL). Ireland (with transition year). Italy *(Istituto professionale* + 2 possible extra years). Luxembourg (vocational scheme). Netherlands (MBO). Portugal. Iceland *(Skipstjórnarpróf 3.stig. Sjúkralidapróf)*. Liechtenstein *(Berufslehre* and *Berufsschule Berufsmittelschule)* (possibly 4 years). Norway (possibly 4 years)
4 years	Belgium (possibly + 1 year). Luxembourg. Netherlands (long MBO. second level apprenticeship). Austria *(Berufsschule*: 2 to 4 years; *berufsbildende mittlere Schule*: 1 to 4 years). Iceland *(Sveinspróf)*. Liechtenstein *(Kindergartenseminar)*
5 years	Italy *(Istituto tecnico)*. Luxembourg (2 training streams). Austria *(berufsbildende höhere Schule)*. Iceland *(Vélstjórnarpróf 4.stig)*
6 years	Netherlands (third level apprenticeship)

1.3. Age

The theoretical age for pupils entering lower secondary education in the countries under study varies between 10 and 13.

Table 4. Theoretical age of entering lower secondary education, 1995/96

Age 10	Germany (most of the *Länder)*. Austria
Age 11	France. Italy. England. Wales. Northern Ireland
Age 12	Belgium. Greece. Spain. Ireland. Luxembourg. Netherlands. Portugal (third stage of *ensino básico)*. Scotland. Liechtenstein
Age 13	Denmark (7th year of *folkeskole)*. Finland (beginning of the upper stage of *Peruskoulu grundskola)*. Sweden (7th year of the *Grundskola)*. Iceland (8th year of *Grunnskóli)*. Norway (years 7 to 9 of *Grunnskole*[8]*)*

Entry into the second stage takes place between the ages of 14 and 16.

Pupils finish upper secondary education between the ages of 15 and 21, depending on the country and on the type of institution. Three countries account for this wide variation: at one end of the scale is Austria, where certain pupils leave secondary education at age 15 or 16 after a pre-vocational year or at the end of a course lasting one or two years in a *berufsbildende mittlere Schule*; at the other end is the Netherlands, where a long-term apprenticeship leads pupils to remain in secondary education up to the age of 20 or 21, and Iceland where most secondary education courses last until pupils reach the age of 20.

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[6] Pupils are required to attend school for 13 years to obtain the general higher education entrance qualification. However there is an agreement between the *Länder* that schooling of 12 years will be accepted provided that it can be shown that a certain number of teaching periods have been covered.

[7] This refers to further education which offers vocational courses but is not designated as upper secondary education.

[8] From 1997, years 8 to 10.

Table 5. Theoretical age of entering upper secondary education, 1995/96

Age 14	Belgium, Italy, Austria, England, Wales, Northern Ireland
Age 15	Germany *(Berufsfachschule* and *Berufsschule* after 9 years full-time compulsory general education up to the end of lower secondary level), Greece, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands (HAVO, VWO), Austria *(Berufsschule)*, Portugal
Age 16	Denmark, Germany, Spain, Netherlands (apprenticeship, MBO), Finland, Sweden, Scotland, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway

Table 6. Theoretical age of leaving upper secondary education, 1995/96

Age 15	Austria (end of compulsory schooling *Polytechnischer Lehrgang*, end of a one-year course in a *berufsbildende mittlere Schule)*
Age 16	Austria (end of a two-year phase in a *berufsbildende mittlere Schule)*, Germany *(Berufsfachschule* – one year), England, Wales, Northern Ireland (GCSE)
Age 17	Ireland, Italy *(Scuola magistrale)*, Germany *(Berufsfachschule* – two years), Netherlands (HAVO), Austria (end of a two-year course in a *Berufsschule* or end of a three-year course in a *berufsbildende mittlere Schule)*
Age 18	Belgium, Germany (for vocational education – *Berufsfachschule* and *Berufsschule* 3 years, *Fachoberschule* 2 years; for general education – *gymnasiale Oberstufe* 2 years in some *Länder)*, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland (if transition year), Italy *(Istituto magistrale, Liceo artistico)*, Netherlands (VWO, short MBO, first-level apprenticeship), Austria (end of a three-year course in a *Berufsschule* or end of a four-year course in a *berufsbildende mittlere Schule*, or successful passing of the secondary school leaving examination *(Reifeprüfung)* at academic secondary school *(allgemeinbildende höhere Schule))*, Portugal, England, Wales, Northern Ireland (GCE A level/AS examinations, GNVQs), Scotland
Age 19	Denmark, Germany *(gymnasiale Oberstufe* in most *Länder)*, France *(baccalauréat professionnel)*, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands (MBO), Austria (end of a four-year course in a *Berufsschule* or end of a five-year course in a *berufsbildende höhere Schule* and successful passing of the *Reifeprüfung*, or successful passing of the *Reife- und Befähigungsprüfung* in a *Bildungsanstalt für Kindergartenpädagogik* or a *Bildungsanstalt für Sozialpädagogik)*, Finland, Sweden, Liechtenstein *(Berufslehre* and *Berufsschule, Berufsmittelschule)*, Norway
Age 20	Netherlands (long MBO, second-level apprenticeship), Iceland, Liechtenstein *(Gymnasium)*
Age 21	Netherlands (third-level apprenticeship)

1.4. Conditions of access

In most of the countries under study, lower secondary education is open to all pupils without any specific conditions. For countries with a single structure (Denmark, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Norway), it is simply a continuation of their education. In the other countries, the transition from primary education to lower secondary education involves a change of school.

However, some countries do stipulate certain restrictions. For instance in Italy and in most cases in Belgium,[9] entry into lower secondary education is subject to pupils obtaining a primary school leaving certificate. In the Netherlands, access to some types of school depends on pupil assessment which, most commonly, occurs through centrally organised tests in the final year of primary school. In a minority of schools in England and in Northern Ireland, pupils have to pass an entrance examination, as was the case for all primary school pupils in Luxembourg until September 1996.[10]

In Austria, the prerequisite for admission to an *allgemeinbildende höhere Schule* is the successful completion of the fourth year of primary school plus an assessment of 'Excellent' or 'Good' in German, reading and mathematics. In addition, the staff council of the *Volksschule* may approve a pupil's transfer to an *allgemeinbildende höhere Schule*, even if the assessment is only 'Satisfactory'. If the pupil is not automatically entitled to enter the *allgemeinbildende höhere Schule*, there is a possibility of taking an admission examination.

In Germany, there are differences between *Länder*. The recommendation of a pupil's primary school is taken as a basis for decision or as guidance about the future school career. In all cases this is combined with detailed consultations with the parents. The final decision is taken by parents or by the receiving school or by the school supervisory authority. For certain school types, admission is dependent on pupils demonstrating a certain level of ability and/or the capacity of the chosen school.

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[9] Pupils who have reached the age of 12 but do not hold the certificate of basic education may enter first secondary class B to acquire this certificate after one or two years. A special procedure exists which allows, in exceptional cases, immediate access to secondary A classes.

[10] The admission examination in Luxembourg is being replaced by new procedures which have yet to be finalised.

Table 7. Access conditions for lower secondary education, 1995/96

No conditions	Denmark, Spain, Greece, France, Ireland, Netherlands (VBO), Austria *(Hauptschule)*, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, United Kingdom, Iceland, Norway
Decision of an admission council or 'class council'	Luxembourg (from 1996), Liechtenstein *(Oberschule, Realschule, Gymnasium)*
Primary school leaving certificate	Belgium, Italy
Entrance examination	Ireland (certain secondary schools); Netherlands (MAVO, HAVO, VWO – usually through central assessment tests in the primary school); Austria *(allgemeinbildende höhere Schule*: in case of bad marks in German, reading or mathematics); England and Northern Ireland (grammar schools)

In order to gain access to upper secondary general education, most countries stipulate that pupils must have successfully completed lower secondary education either upon completion of the single structure (Denmark, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, Norway) or at the end of lower secondary education (Germany, Greece, Spain, Italy, Netherlands, Austria). For some schools, Austria requires an entrance examination. In Belgium,[11] France and Luxembourg, whether pupils move on to upper secondary education is subject to a decision by a 'class council'. In Ireland and Iceland, pupils automatically move up from one level to the next. However, in the United Kingdom, on completion of compulsory education at age 16, pupils who wish to continue their studies, and who meet any relevant course requirements, may do so either in the 'sixth form' of a secondary school (not in Scotland) or at a further education institution.

Table 8. Access conditions for upper secondary education, 1995/96

No conditions	Ireland, Austria *(Berufsschule)*, United Kingdom, Iceland[12]
Decision by a 'class council' or guidance council	Belgium, France, Luxembourg
Successful completion of lower secondary schooling	Denmark, Germany (with the exception of vocational training in the dual system in the *Berufsschule* and the workplace for which there are no admission prerequisites), Greece, Spain, Italy, Netherlands, Austria *(Oberstufe* of the *allgemeinbildende höhere Schule)*, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Liechtenstein
Entrance examination	Austria *(berufsbildende mittlere Schule, berufsbildende höhere Schule* and entry into a *Bildungsanstalt für Kindergartenpädagogik* or a *Bildungsanstalt für Sozialpädagogik)*, Liechtenstein *(Berufsmittelschule)*

1.5. Allocation to individual schools

Pupils may be admitted to particular lower secondary schools according to the location of the applicant's residence; through selection by the receiving schools or other education authorities; or by parental choice. In some countries, only one of these principles applies while in others more than one procedure is used. In the latter countries, different schemes have been developed to reconcile conflicting demands when more than one criterion for admission is adopted.

Geographical catchment areas operate in most countries. Except in Belgium, Luxembourg, Sweden and England, Wales and Northern Ireland, pupils are expected normally to attend a school close to their home. In Germany, catchment areas exist in some cases but not in others.[13] In Finland, France and Portugal, school districts or sectors have been abolished recently in some regions. The definition of catchment areas is not standard. Residence in a particular educational district or attendance at a specific primary school may determine the secondary school that a new pupil enters, as in Greece and Spain. Parents may choose between schools within a larger region, as in Denmark or Spain.

Geographical criteria may apply in other ways. Parental choice may only prevail if the desired school is within reasonable distance (as in the cases of Ireland and Spain) or where transport or other costs to public authorities are moderate (Sweden and Denmark). In Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom, the selection criteria of schools that are oversubscribed may include proximity of the home. Distance and transport may restrict choice, as in Scotland and Iceland, where pupils from inaccessible areas need to attend boarding schools.

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[11] In Belgium, pupils aged 15 who have not successfully completed lower secondary education may be admitted into the upper stage of vocational secondary education.

[12] In Iceland, pupils are admitted into upper secondary education after having finished compulsory schooling but there are admission requirements for different programmes of study.

[13] Pupils in compulsory education wishing to attend a primary school, *Hauptschule* or *Berufsschule* must always attend the establishment closest to their home. This rule applies to other types of secondary school where catchment areas apply. Where catchment areas do not operate for particular kinds of secondary school, parents are always able to choose the school for their children, providing that this school has places.

While the rationale for catchment areas in the past may have been to equalise educational opportunities, it is now more frequent for localities with their own budgets and school management to be protected from the financial loss or organisational inefficiency that complete freedom of parental geographical choice of school may bring. In England and Wales, it is accepted that schools which do not attract enough pupils may have to close, as it is in Belgium where, however, the school in question may be absorbed by another.

Parents' rights to choose a school for their children are assured by law in many countries.[14] In some cases, it is confined to their right to choose a school according to the mother tongue (Finland), religious orientation in those countries where grant-aided schools form a high proportion of all establishments (Ireland and the Netherlands) or differences in curricula, especially foreign languages (France). Parental choice is a fundamental principle in Belgium and Scotland. In England and Wales, parents' choice of school must be respected provided that their child meets the admission criteria and the school is not oversubscribed. In Germany, parental choice is a legal right in some *Länder* but not others. In most countries where normally children are expected to attend a local school, there are opportunities for parents to request schools outside the district. Decisions are made by local education authorities. These authorities also commonly decide on requests for a type of school by parents whose children have special educational needs.

Limits on the number of pupils a school may take are the main obstacle to free parental choice, apart from selection on grounds of aptitude where there are different kinds of secondary school. When demand exceeds supply, then the school or other authorities choose rather than the parents. In some countries, notably Spain, there are national criteria (including parental income) but the most common basis for admission is the attendance of other siblings at the school. In Ireland and Italy, the admitting school makes its own decisions. In England and Wales, admission policies are determined either by the local authority (LEA) or by the individual school.

In France, in public education parents are as a rule required to enrol their children in the *collège* of the school catchment area in which they live (geographical sector of recruitment for a given *collège*). If a *collège* does not offer certain courses, exceptions can be granted allowing parents to send their children to another *collège* which does.

Pupils generally move on from *collège* to a *lycée* in their school district (geographical zone covering several school catchment areas), unless their chosen option or specialisation requires attending an institution further away. There are several exceptions to the school district assignment rules. Limited experiments have been set up allowing families to choose from several schools.

Conflicts between parental wishes and school or higher authority decisions may be resolved by appeal procedures. These appeals may be settled through legal processes as in Austria, Germany,[15] Liechtenstein and Scotland. Most common is for appeals to be decided by educational agencies, by the administration (such as the inspector of the *académie* in France) or by the provincial director of education in Spain. In England and Wales, local appeals panels must have a balanced membership and include a lay member to ensure impartiality.

While similar procedures apply to admissions to upper secondary institutions, there is usually wider pupil and parent choice, especially where some courses are not available in all institutions.[16] Assessment of pupil attainment and aptitude has a more significant role at this level in most countries.

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[14] As in laws in Belgium (1959), Denmark (1995), Spain (1985), Italy (Constitution 1948), Austria (1955), Sweden (1992), England and Wales (1980) and Scotland (1980).

[15] Normally, in Germany, parents wishing to choose a school outside their local area may apply to the school authority which decides on each case, after consultation with the parents, with the well-being of the pupil being the deciding factor.

[16] In Finland, for instance, pupils completing compulsory education have the right to apply to any upper secondary institution – general or vocational – anywhere in the country.

1.6. Further educational and career options

Further educational and career options at the end of the various types of education should be seen in relation to the objectives set.

The logical next step after lower secondary education is further studies at upper secondary level. Nonetheless, in countries where the end of compulsory schooling coincides with the end of lower secondary education (Greece, Spain, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Scotland) or of the single structure (Denmark, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Norway), pupils are also able to choose whether they wish to enter employment. As the exact timing of the end of compulsory schooling depends on their date of birth, pupils in some countries may be required to start the first year of upper secondary schooling.

Again, general education acquired at upper secondary level generally leads to further studies, whereas vocational education generally leads to a job, although it can permit access to higher education and this is increasingly the case.

1.7. Full-time/part-time education

Generally speaking, secondary education is provided on a full-time basis. Many countries do, however, offer part-time vocational education for certain ages (Belgium, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Austria,[17] United Kingdom,[18] Norway), 'alternating' education (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Spain, France, Luxembourg, Netherlands), or evening classes for pupils who have dropped out of school (Italy, Portugal). In Greece and Portugal, evening classes are open to young people aged 15 who are already working, as well as to adults who left school early. In Portugal, 'second chance' education takes 'recurrent' and 'alternating' forms. In Belgium, Finland, Sweden and Iceland, adults are allowed to complete their general or vocational education at evening classes. In the United Kingdom, further education institutions offer students over compulsory school age the opportunity to study for nationally recognised qualifications on a full- or part-time basis. In Belgium and Germany, where education is compulsory until the age of 18, students may leave school earlier but, for them, part-time vocational education is obligatory.[19]

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[17] In Austria, the part-time vocational school is compulsory for all apprentices.

[18] In the United Kingdom, after the completion of compulsory education.

[19] In Germany, compulsory full-time schooling lasts nine or ten years but those not continuing in full-time general or vocational education must attend vocational schools for three years on a part-time basis.

Table 9. Structures of secondary education in the French and German-speaking Communities of BELGIUM,[20] 1995/96.

	Enseignement général	*Enseignement technique et artistique de transition*	*Enseignement technique et artistique de qualification*	*Enseignement professionnel*
Lower or upper secondary	3 stages called '*degrés*' of 2 years each. Lower secondary education has 1 *degré*, upper secondary education consists of the 2 following *degrés*	Upper secondary, organised in 2 *degrés* of 2 years each	Upper secondary, organised in 2 *degrés* of 2 years each	Lower and upper secondary
General objectives	Lower secondary Reveal pupils' aptitudes by offering a common programme including experimental and optional activities (observation *degré*) Upper secondary Prepare for higher education, keeping open the option to enter working life (guidance *degré* and determination *degré*)	Prepare pupils for higher education, while leaving them the option of entering employment	Prepare pupils for employment while leaving them the option of entering higher education	Prepare pupils for employment while leaving them the option of entering higher education
Duration	Lower secondary: 2 years Upper secondary: 4 years (+ possibility of 1 year of preparation for higher education)	4 years (+ 1 optional year of preparation for higher education)	4 years (+ 1 optional advanced year or specialisation)	Lower secondary: 2 years (first class B and 2nd year of vocational education) Upper secondary: 4 years (+ 1 optional advanced year or specialisation)
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Lower secondary: ages 12-14 Upper secondary: ages 14-18	Ages 14-18 or 19	Ages 14-18 or 19	Lower secondary: ages 12-14 Upper secondary: ages 14-18 or 19
Access conditions and admission criteria	Lower secondary A basic education certificate Upper secondary Successful completion of the 2nd year of lower secondary	Successful completion of the 2nd year of lower secondary	Successful completion of the 2nd year of lower secondary	Lower secondary Minimum age of 12 without necessarily having obtained a primary education certificate Upper secondary Successful completion of the 2nd year of lower secondary or the 2nd year of vocational education
Certificates awarded	Lower secondary: none Upper secondary After 1 year, *certificat de l'enseignement secondaire inférieur* After 4 years, *certificat de l'enseignement secondaire supérieur* (CESS)	After one year, *certificat de l'enseignement secondaire inférieur* After 4 years, *certificat de l'enseignement secondaire supérieur* (CESS)	After 1 year, *certificat de l'enseignement secondaire inférieur* After 2 years, *certificat de qualification courte* (short qualification) After 4 years, *certificat de l'enseignement secondaire supérieur* (CESS) and *certificat de qualification longue* (long qualification)	Lower secondary: none Upper secondary: After 1 year, *certificat de l'enseignement secondaire inférieur* After 4 years, *certificat d'études* and/or *certificat de qualification longue* (long qualification) After 5 years, *certificat de l'enseignement secondaire supérieur* (CESS) and/or *certificat de qualification*
Further educational and career options	After lower secondary Upper secondary education After upper secondary Higher education	Higher education	Employment Higher education or optional 1 year specialisation to obtain a new qualification or 1 year of preparation for higher education	Employment After the 6th year of vocational education, 1 optional year of specialisation or a 7th type A vocational year which leads to a new qualification After the 7th year of type B or C, short higher education
Full-time or part-time	Full-time for the two levels	Full-time	Full-time	Lower secondary: full-time Upper secondary: full-time or part-time[21]

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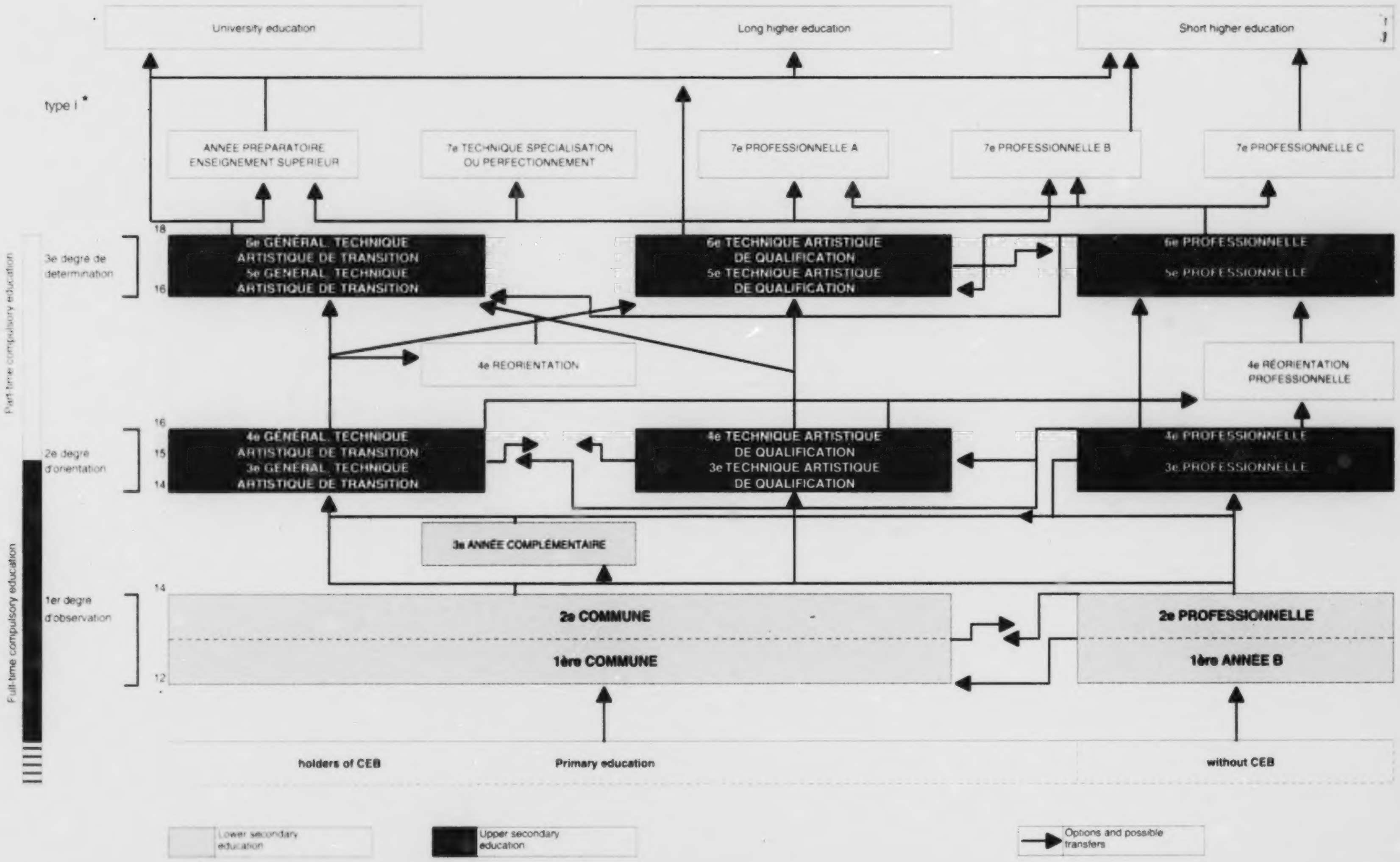
[20] A reform is in progress in the French Community which will change some of the conditions described in the table.

[21] As of age 15 if the pupil has completed lower secondary school; if not, as of age 16.

Part-time = 40 weeks of 15 lessons lasting 50 minutes each (more or less equal proportions of vocational and general education), leading to a certificate equivalent to that awarded at the end of long or short type vocational education.

Secondary education in the Belgian education system (French and German-speaking Communities), 1995/96


University education
Long higher education
Short higher education
type I *
ANNÉE PRÉPARATOIRE ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR
7e TECHNIQUE SPÉCIALISATION OU PERFECTIONNEMENT
7e PROFESSIONNELLE A
7e PROFESSIONNELLE B
7e PROFESSIONNELLE C
18
3e degré de détermination
16
6e GÉNÉRAL, TECHNIQUE ARTISTIQUE DE TRANSITION
5e GÉNÉRAL, TECHNIQUE ARTISTIQUE DE TRANSITION
6e TECHNIQUE ARTISTIQUE DE QUALIFICATION
5e TECHNIQUE ARTISTIQUE DE QUALIFICATION
6e PROFESSIONNELLE
5e PROFESSIONNELLE
4e RÉORIENTATION
4e RÉORIENTATION PROFESSIONNELLE
16
2e degré d'orientation
15
14
4e GÉNÉRAL, TECHNIQUE ARTISTIQUE DE TRANSITION
3e GÉNÉRAL, TECHNIQUE ARTISTIQUE DE TRANSITION
4e TECHNIQUE ARTISTIQUE DE QUALIFICATION
3e TECHNIQUE ARTISTIQUE DE QUALIFICATION
4e PROFESSIONNELLE
3e PROFESSIONNELLE
3e ANNÉE COMPLÉMENTAIRE
14
1er degré d'observation
12
2e COMMUNE
1ère COMMUNE
2e PROFESSIONNELLE
1ère ANNÉE B
holders of CEB
Primary education
without CEB
Part-time compulsory education
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Options and possible transfers

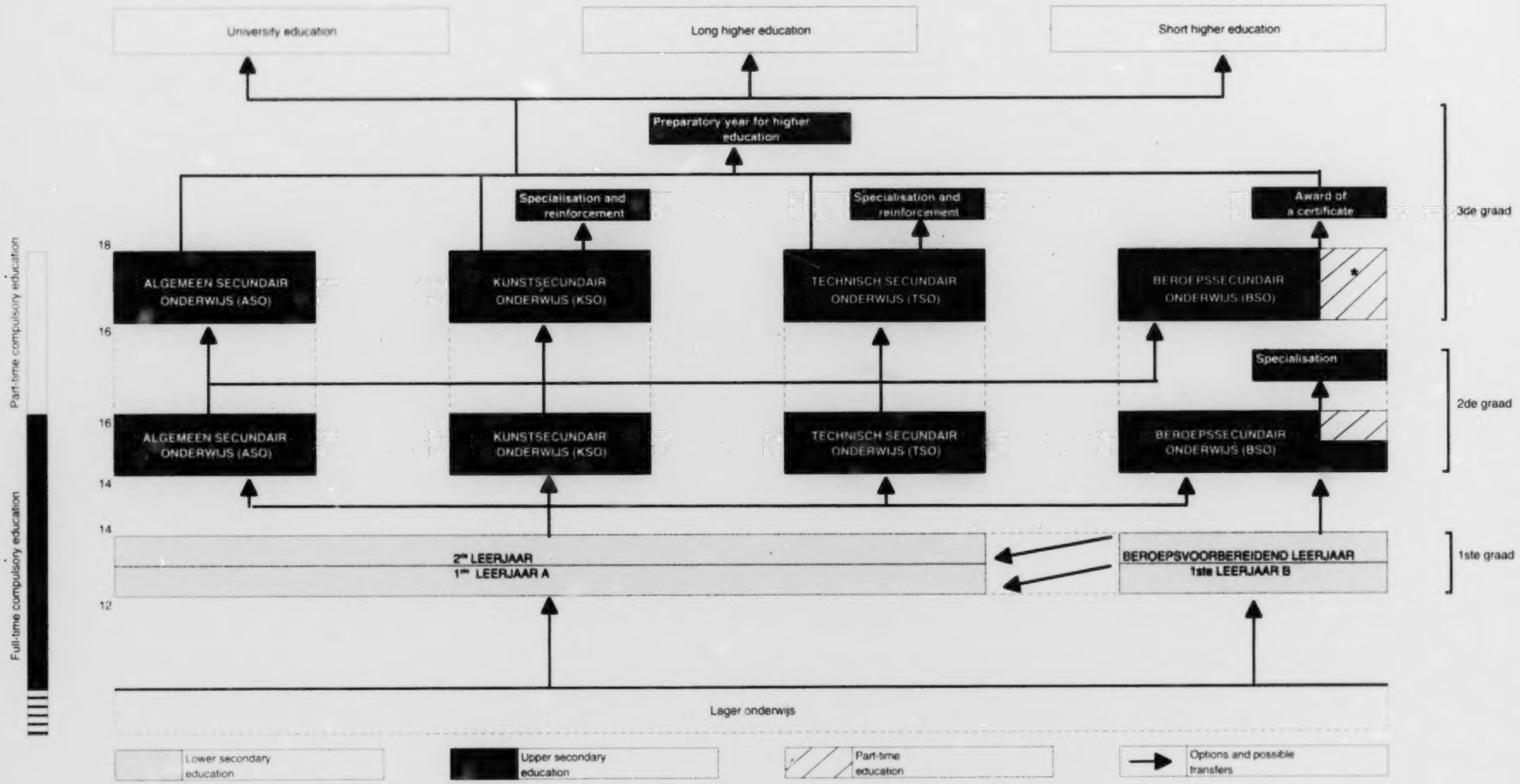
* A small proportion of pupils (± 3%) attend type II "traditional" education which preceded the current reformed system (type I). Type II consists of 2 stages of 3 years and is not shown here.

Source: Eurydice

Table 10. Structures of secondary education in the Flemish Community of BELGIUM, 1995/96.

	1st stage	*Algemeen secundair onderwijs*	*Kunstsecundair onderwijs*	*Technisch secundair onderwijs*	*Beroepssecundair onderwijs*
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary (1st stage) Streams are integrated, although there is a first year B for those who have no certificate of primary education and a pre-vocational class	Upper secondary (2nd and 3rd stages)	Upper secondary (2nd and 3rd stages)	Upper secondary (2nd and 3rd stages)	Upper secondary vocational (2nd and 3rd stages)
General objectives	Provide a broad basic education, allowing pupils to become acquainted with a large number of subject areas and be able to decide for themselves which ones they wish to pursue further	Provide broad theoretical education which can serve as a solid foundation for higher education	Combine a broad general education with practical and active work in the arts. Art is studied and practised with a view to general educational objectives	Offer an education comprised of general classes and technical-theoretical and practical classes	Prepare pupils for a full and active life in society Teach pupils a trade, taking into account their possibilities, limitations and difficulties Give pupils an education which enables them to develop their personalities and to become active and responsible members of society
Duration	2 years	2nd stage: 2 years 3rd stage: 2 years	2nd stage: 2 years 3rd stage: 2 years (and 1 year of specialisation or advanced studies)	2nd stage: 2 years 3rd stage: 2 years (and 1 year of specialisation or advanced studies)	2nd stage: 2 years + 1 optional year 3rd stage: 2 years + 1 year (to obtain the *diploma van secundair onderwijs*)
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 12-14	2nd stage: ages 14 to 16 3rd stage: 16 to 18	2nd stage: ages 14 to 16 3rd stage: ages 16 to 18 or 19	2nd stage: ages 14 to 16 3rd stage: ages 16 to 18 or 19	2nd stage: ages 14 to 16 or 17 3rd stage: ages 16 to 18 or 19
Access conditions and admission criteria	First year A: hold the certificate of primary education or have completed the 6th year of primary education and receive a favourable opinion from the *Toelatingsraad* (admissions board) First year B: hold a certificate of primary education or have reached the age of 12 without necessarily having obtained a certificate of primary education	2nd stage Successful completion of the 1st stage of secondary education 3rd stage Successful completion of the 2nd stage of secondary education	2nd stage Successful completion of the 1st stage of secondary education 3rd stage Successful completion of the 2nd stage of secondary education	2nd stage Successful completion of the 1st stage of secondary education 3rd stage Successful completion of the 2nd stage of secondary education	2nd stage Successful completion of the 2nd year of the 1st stage or the pre-vocational class or have reached the age of 16, approval of the admissions board 3rd stage Successful completion of the 2nd year of the 2nd stage
Certificates awarded	After 1 year: primary education certificate for those pupils who have not yet received one and who successfully compete the first year After 2 years: first stage *diploma van secundair onderwijs*, certificate of primary education for those pupils who have not yet received one and who successfully complete the vocational education class	2nd stage After 2 years: 2nd stage *diploma van secundair onderwijs* 3rd stage After 2 years: *diploma van secundair onderwijs*	2nd stage After 2 years: 2nd stage *diploma van secundair onderwijs*. 3rd stage After 2 years: *diploma van secundair onderwijs* After 3 years: *diploma van secundair onderwijs* of the third year of the 3rd stage	2nd stage After 2 years: 2nd stage *diploma van secundair onderwijs*. 3rd stage After 2 years: *diploma van secundair onderwijs* After 3 years: *diploma van secundair onderwijs* of the third year of the 3rd stage	2nd stage After 2 years: 2nd stage *diploma van secundair onderwijs* 3rd stage After 2 years: *diploma van secundair onderwijs* of the second year of the 3rd stage After 3 years: *diploma van secundair onderwijs*, or *diploma van secundair onderwijs* of the third year of the 3rd stage if conditions for the *diploma van secundair onderwijs* have not been met.
Further educational and career options	After the 1st stage After the 2nd year: 2nd stage of general, technical, artistic or vocational secondary education After the pre-vocational year 2nd year of the 1st or 2nd stage of vocational education	After the 2nd stage 3rd stage of general, technical, artistic or vocational secondary education After the 3rd stage higher education	After the 2nd stage 3rd stage of general, technical, artistic or vocational secondary education After the 3rd stage higher education or employment	After the 2nd stage 3rd stage of general, technical, artistic or vocational secondary education After the 3rd stage higher education or employment	After the 2nd stage 3rd stage of vocational education. After each year in this stage: possibility of rejoining general, technical or artistic secondary education (e.g. from the end of the first year of 2nd stage vocational education to the first year of the 2nd stage of technical education) After the 3rd stage after the 2nd or the 3rd year of the 3rd stage possibility of rejoining general, technical or artistic secondary education (e.g. from the end of the 2nd year of the 3rd stage of vocational education to the 1st year of the 3rd stage of technical education), higher education or employment
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time or part-time for pupils aged 16, or 15 if they have not completed the 1st stage

Secondary education in the Belgian education system (Flemish Community), 1995/96


University education
Long higher education
Short higher education
Preparatory year for higher education
Specialisation and reinforcement
Specialisation and reinforcement
Award of a certificate
3de graad
18
ALGEMEEN SECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (ASO)
KUNSTSECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (KSO)
TECHNISCH SECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (TSO)
BEROEPSSECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (BSO)
*
16
Specialisation
2de graad
16
ALGEMEEN SECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (ASO)
KUNSTSECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (KSO)
TECHNISCH SECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (TSO)
BEROEPSSECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (BSO)
14
14
2de LEERJAAR
1ste LEERJAAR A
BEROEPSVOORBEREIDEND LEERJAAR
1ste LEERJAAR B
1ste graad
12
Lager onderwijs
Part-time compulsory education
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transfers

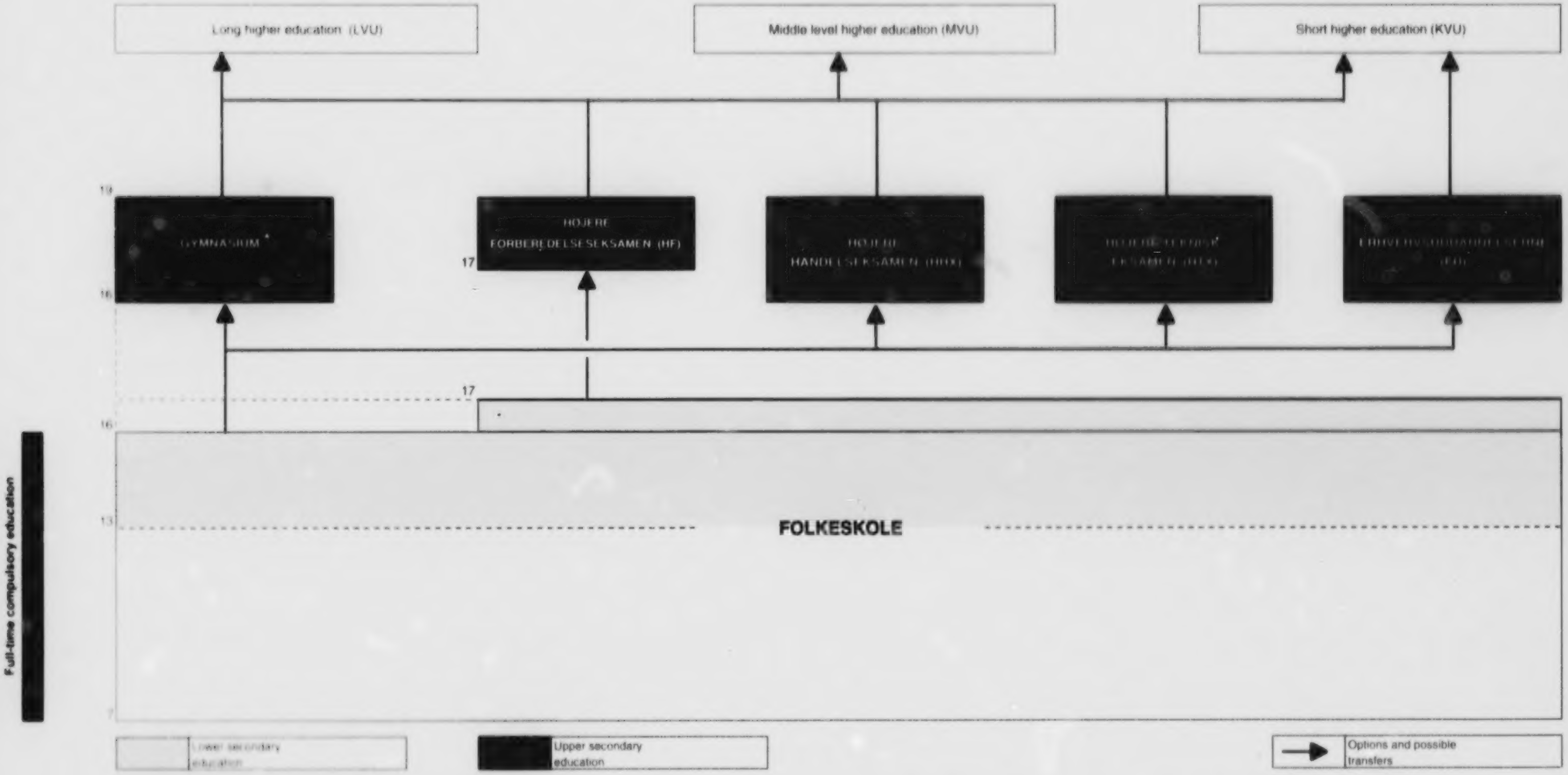
* Part-time education is offered to young people aged 16, or 15 if they have completed their 1st stage level *(graad)*, even if they have failed.

Source: Eurydice.

Table 11. Structures of secondary education in DENMARK, 1995/96.

	Folkeskole	*Gymnasium*	*Højere forberedelseseksamen* (HF)	*Højere handelseksamen* (HHX)	*Højere teknisk eksamen* (HTX)	Vocational education and training courses (EU)
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary (end of common structure)	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary
General objectives	Acquire knowledge, skills and working methods which assist individual pupils in their development. Prepare pupils for life in a democratic society	Prepare for higher education	Prepare for higher education	Grant access to higher education Prepare for professional activities in the private sector	Grant access to higher education Prepare for professional activities in the private sector	Award vocational qualifications which facilitate access to employment. Provide the basic education necessary to pursue further technical and commercial studies
Duration	3 or 4 years	3 years There is an alternative to *Gymnasium* called the *Studenterkurser*, which can be completed in two years following the 10th year of basic education. These courses (same branches, levels and subject areas as the *Gymnasium*) are intended for older pupils	2 years following the 10th year of basic education	3 years or 1 year if the pupil holds a diploma from *gymnasium* or HF courses	3 years	3 to 4½ years
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 13-16 or 17	Ages 16/17-19/20	Ages 17-19	Ages 16-19	Ages 16-19	Ages 16-19 (20½)
Access conditions and admission criteria	As the *folkeskole* is a unified structure, there is no selection between its lower and upper levels (considered here as the lower level of secondary education)	Completion of the 9th year of *folkeskole* + recommendation of teaching staff	Completion of the 10th year of *folkeskole*. Recommendation of the preceding school	Completion of the 9th year of *folkeskole*	Completion of the 9th year of *folkeskole*.	Completion of the 9th year of *folkeskole*.
Certificates awarded	*Folkeskolens afsluttende prøver* School leaving examinations are not compulsory, but those who leave school receive a certificate	*Studentereksamen*	*Højereforberedelseseksamen*	*Højerehandelseksamen*	*Højereteknisk eksamen*	Vocational qualification for a specific trade
Further educational and career options	Choice of upper secondary courses	Access to higher education	Access to higher education	Access to higher education Exercise of certain professional activities	Access to higher education Exercise of certain professional activities	Employment. Commercial or technical studies
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Dual system with Practical training (2/3) Theoretical training (1/3)

Secondary education in the Danish education system, 1995/96


Long higher education (LVU)
Middle level higher education (MVU)
Short higher education (KVU)
19
GYMNASIUM *
HOJERE FORBEREDELSESEKSAMEN (HF)
HOJERE HANDELSEKSAMEN (HHX)
HOJERE TEKNISK EKSAMEN (HTX)
ERHVERVSUDDANNELSERNE (EU)
17
16
17
16
13
FOLKESKOLE
7
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Options and possible transfers

* There is an alternative to the *Gymnasium* called the *Studentereksamen* which can be completed in two years after leaving the 10° year of the *Folkeskole*. This course, in the same sections, levels and subjects as the *Gymnasium* is aimed at students who are considerably older than normal.

Source: Eurydice

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Table 12. Structures of secondary education in GERMANY, 1995/96.

	Gesamtschule	***Gymnasium***	***Realschule***	***Hauptschule***	***Gymnasiale Oberstufe***	***Fachoberschule***	***Berufsfachschule***	***Berufsschule* + on-the-job training**
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary	Lower secondary	Lower secondary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary
General objectives	a) The **cooperative** type combines the three schools in the traditional system in one unit (see descriptions of the *Hauptschule, Realschule, Gymnasium*) b) The **integrated** type constitutes an educational and organisational entity. In some subjects pupils are taught in groups on different levels (at least two) which are defined with reference to the curriculum of the chosen course	*Gymnasien* offer an advanced general secondary education and prepare pupils for higher education (see description of the *Gymnasiale Oberstufe*)	An extended general education which goes beyond that offered by the *Hauptschule*	A basic general education leading up to the end of compulsory schooling	Build on in-depth lower secondary education to prepare pupils for higher education	Technical secondary school specialised in different subject areas and preparing for *Fachhochschulen*	Vocational school offering vocational training and preparing for various technical occupations, while providing a general education	Part-time vocational school leading to a qualification in a state-recognised occupation *(anerkannter Ausbildungsberuf)* In the courses offered at the *Berufsschule*, special attention is paid to the requirements of training in the Dual System
Duration	5 or 6 years	In lower secondary 6 years	6 years	5 years The *Hauptschule* comprises years 5 to 10 in some of the *Länder*	3 years [22]	2 years	1 to 3 years	3 years in general 12 hrs a week at the *Berufsschule* (= 2 days) 3 days in the company
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 10-15 or 10-16	Ages 10-16	Ages 10-16	Ages 10-15	Ages 16-19	Ages 16-18	Ages 15/16-19	Ages 15-18 or 16-19
Access conditions and admission criteria	Completion of primary school	Completion of year 4 and on the recommendation of the primary school	Completion of year 4 and on the recommendation of the primary school	Completion of primary school	Entitlement to proceed to the upper level of *Gymnasium*	*Mittlerer Schulabschluß* *Realschulabschluß*	*Hauptschulabschluß* or *Mittlerer Schulabschluß* *Realschulabschluß*	Completion of full-time compulsory general education *(allgemeine Schulpflicht)*
Certificates awarded	Depending on the chosen course of education *Hauptschulabschluß* *Mittlerer Schulabschluß* *Realschulabschluß* Entitlement to proceed to the upper level of *Gymnasium*	Entitlement to proceed to the upper level of *Gymnasium*	*Realschulabschluß* *Mittlerer Schulabschluß*	*Hauptschulabschluß*	*Allgemeine Hochschulreife*	*Fachhochschulreife*	School-leaving certificates depending on the duration. Basic vocational training certificate after one year, after two years, state-recognised qualification as a technical assistant *(Staatlich geprüfter technischer oder kaufmännischer Assistent)*	School-leaving certificate of the *Berufsschule*. Examinations for on-the-job training are organised by the relevant authorities (e.g. the Chambers of Commerce) and lead to certificates of proficiency *(Facharbeiterbrief, Gesellenbrief, Gehilfenbrief)*
Further educational and career options	(see description of the *Hauptschule, Realschule, Gymnasium*)	*Gymnasiale Oberstufe*	Upper secondary education, e.g. *Berufsfachschulen, Fachoberschulen*	Vocational training in the dual system *Berufsfachschulen*	Access to all higher education institutions in all subject areas	Access to *Fachhochschulen*	Access to employment after two years of training	Access to employment
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Part-time (1st year) Full-time (2nd year)	Full-time	Part-time schooling and on-the-job training (dual system)

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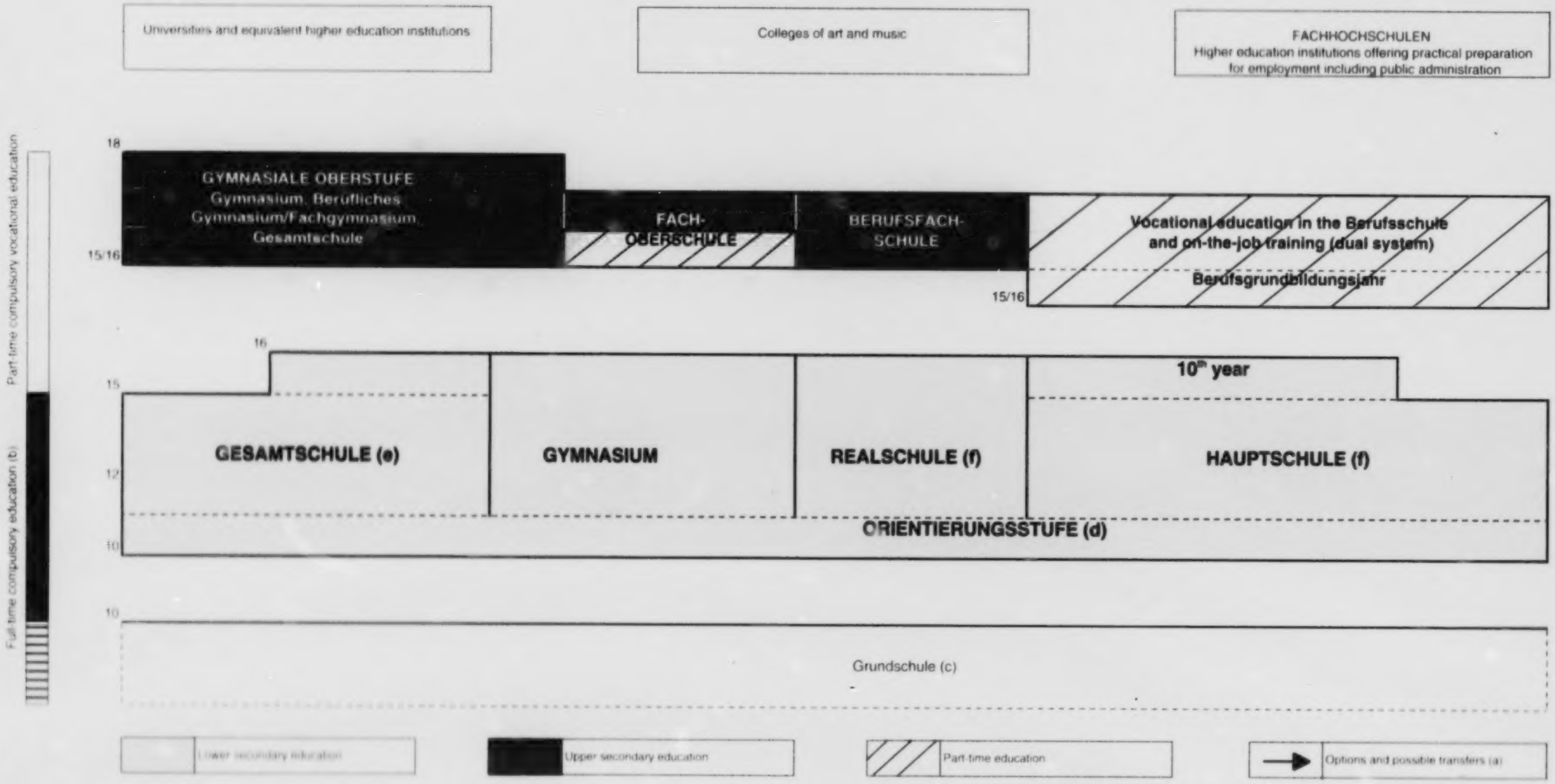
[22] In general, pupils are required to attend school for 13 years to obtain the general higher education entrance qualification. There is agreement between the *Länder* that schooling of 12 years will be recognised if it is shown that a certain total value of teaching periods has been achieved.

Secondary education in the German education system, 1995/96


Universities and equivalent higher education institutions
Colleges of art and music
FACHHOCHSCHULEN
Higher education institutions offering practical preparation for employment including public administration
18
15/16
GYMNASIALE OBERSTUFE
Gymnasium, Berufliches Gymnasium/Fachgymnasium, Gesamtschule
FACH-OBERSCHULE
BERUFSFACH-SCHULE
Vocational education in the Berufsschule and on-the-job training (dual system)
Berufsgrundbildungsjahr
15/16
16
15
12
10
10th year
GESAMTSCHULE (e)
GYMNASIUM
REALSCHULE (f)
HAUPTSCHULE (f)
ORIENTIERUNGSSTUFE (d)
10
Grundschule (c)
Part-time compulsory vocational education
Full-time compulsory education (b)
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transfers (a)

(a) Arrows have not been used in this diagram due to the differences between the *Länder*. Table 12 gives information on the possibilities of transferring from one school to another.

(b) The duration of full-time compulsory schooling (compulsory general education) is 9 years in 12 *Länder* and 10 years in four *Länder*. The subsequent period of part-time compulsory education is three years (compulsory vocational education).

(c) The duration of primary school in Berlin and Brandenburg is 6 years.

(d) Irrespective of school type, years 5 and 6 constitute a phase of particular support, observation and guidance. In some *Länder*, the guidance phase is established as a separate organisational unit independent of the standard school types.

(e) Secondary school which has two different forms: the cooperative type brings schools within in the traditional system *(Hauptschule, Realschule, Gymnasium)* under a single roof and harmonises their curricula to facilitate transfers from one school type to another; the integrated type admits all pupils of a certain age without distinguishing between the traditional school types.

(f) Some *Länder* have lower secondary schools which offer two educational paths — *Hauptschule and Realschule* courses — which prepare pupils to obtain their respective school-leaving certificates. These schools have different names depending on the *Land*.

Source: Eurydice

Table 13. Structures of secondary education in GREECE, 1995/96.

	Gymnasio	*Geniko lykeio*	*Eniaio polykladiko lykeio* (EPL)	*Techniko epaggelmatiko lykeio* (TEL)	*Techniki epaggelmatiki scholi* (TES)
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary
General objectives	Provide a general basic education in order to help general development of pupils in the field of knowledge and of aptitudes, in order to prepare them for life	Shape the character of pupils to enable them to take an active part in the social, economic and cultural development of the country, understand society and choose their further studies and a career	Offer pupils general as well as technical education. Apart from the common curriculum for all, pupils are free to choose their type of course, either vocational or general education giving them entry to higher education	In addition to the objectives of the *Geniko lykeio*, give pupils the necessary technical and vocational knowledge to enable them to develop their skills and successfully work in a specific technical or vocational field	Transmit technical and vocational knowledge and develop pupils' aptitudes in order to permit them to have a technical or vocational activity, in this way contribute to the qualitative and quantitative development of production
Duration	3 years	3 years	3 or 4 years	3 years	2 years (3 years in part-time evening courses)
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 12-15	Ages 15-18	Ages 15-18	Ages 15-18	Ages 15-17 (18)
Access conditions and admission criteria	Primary education certificate	Leaving certificate of the *Gymnasio (Apolytirio Gymnasiou)*	Leaving certificate of the *Gymnasio (Apolytirio Gymnasiou)*	Leaving certificate of the *Gymnasio (Apolytirio Gymnasiou)*	Leaving certificate of the *Gymnasio (Apolytirio Gymnasiou)*
Certificates awarded	*Apolytirio Gymnasiou*	*Apolytirio Lykeiou*	*Apolytirio Lykeiou* or *Ptychio*[23]	*Apolytirio Lykeiou* or *Ptychio*.[24]	*Ptychio TES*
Further educational and career options	All *Lykeia* and *Technikes epaggelmatikes scholes*	University education Non-university higher education Employment	University education Non-university higher education Employment	University education Non-university higher education Employment	With or without obtaining the *Apolytirio TES* employment With the *Apolytirio TES* possibility of entering the first year of a *Geniko lykeio* or the second year of a *Eniaio polykladiko lykeio* or a *Techniko epaggelmatiko lykeio*
Full-time or part-time	Full-time (day courses) Full-time (evening courses)	Full-time (day courses) Part-time (evening courses)	Full-time (day courses) Part-time (evening courses)	Full-time (day courses) Part-time (evening courses)	Full-time (day courses) Part-time (evening courses)

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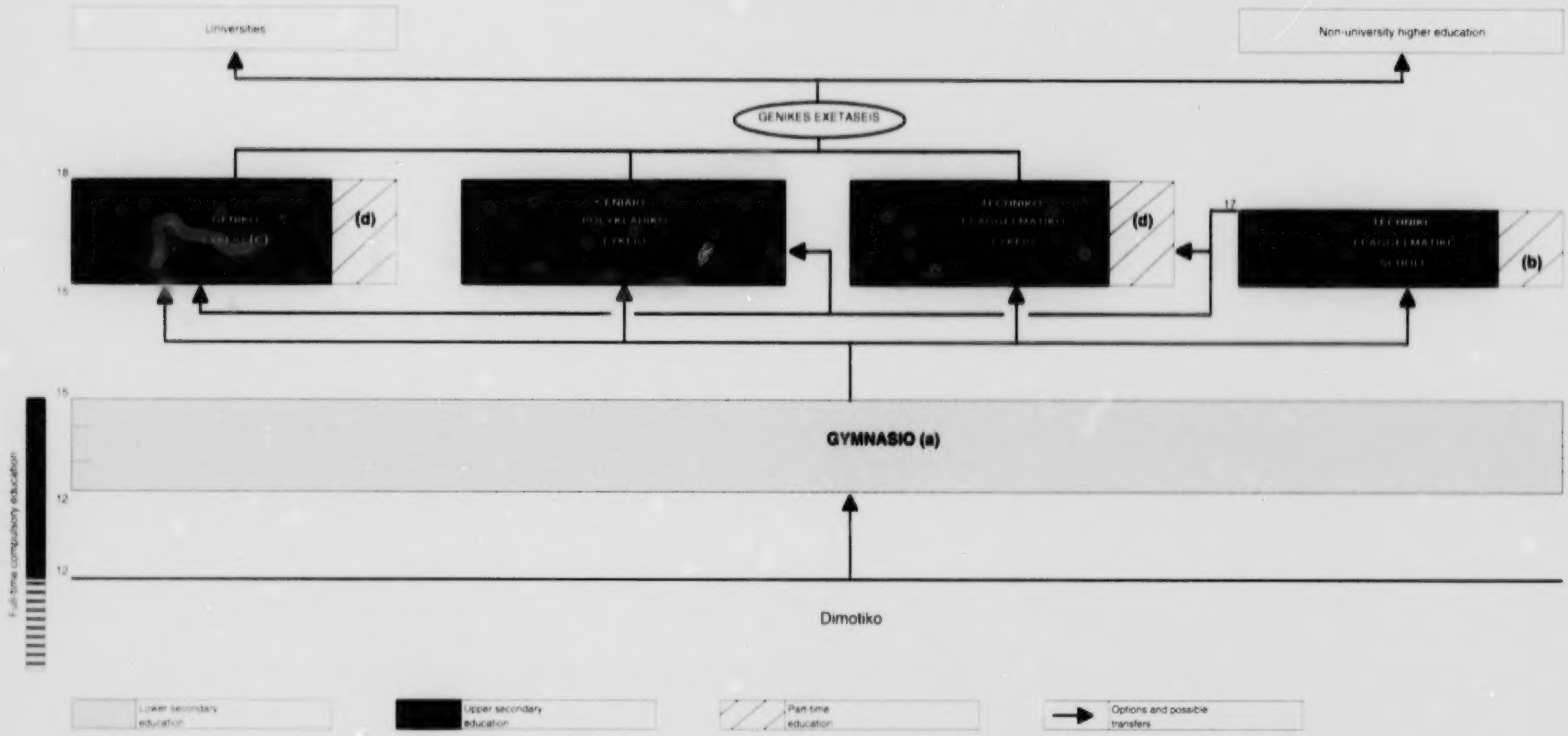
[23] After 3 years at the EPL, the pupils obtain the *Apolytirio Lykeiou*. After the fourth year of EPL, called the specialisation year, pupils obtain the *Ptychio eidikotitas*.

[24] Pupils having finished 3 years of TEL obtain a) *Ptychio TEL* if they have followed specialisation studies; b) *Apolytirio Lykeiou* if they have followed normal studies.

Secondary education in the Greek education system, 1995/96


Universities
Non-university higher education
GENIKES EXETASEIS
18
GENIKO LYKEIO (c)
(d)
ENIAIO POLYKLADIKO LYKEIO
TECHNIKO EPAGGELMATIKO LYKEIO
(d)
17
TECHNIKI EPAGGELMATIKI SCHOLI
(b)
15
15
GYMNASIO (a)
12
12
Full-time compulsory education
Dimotiko
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transfers

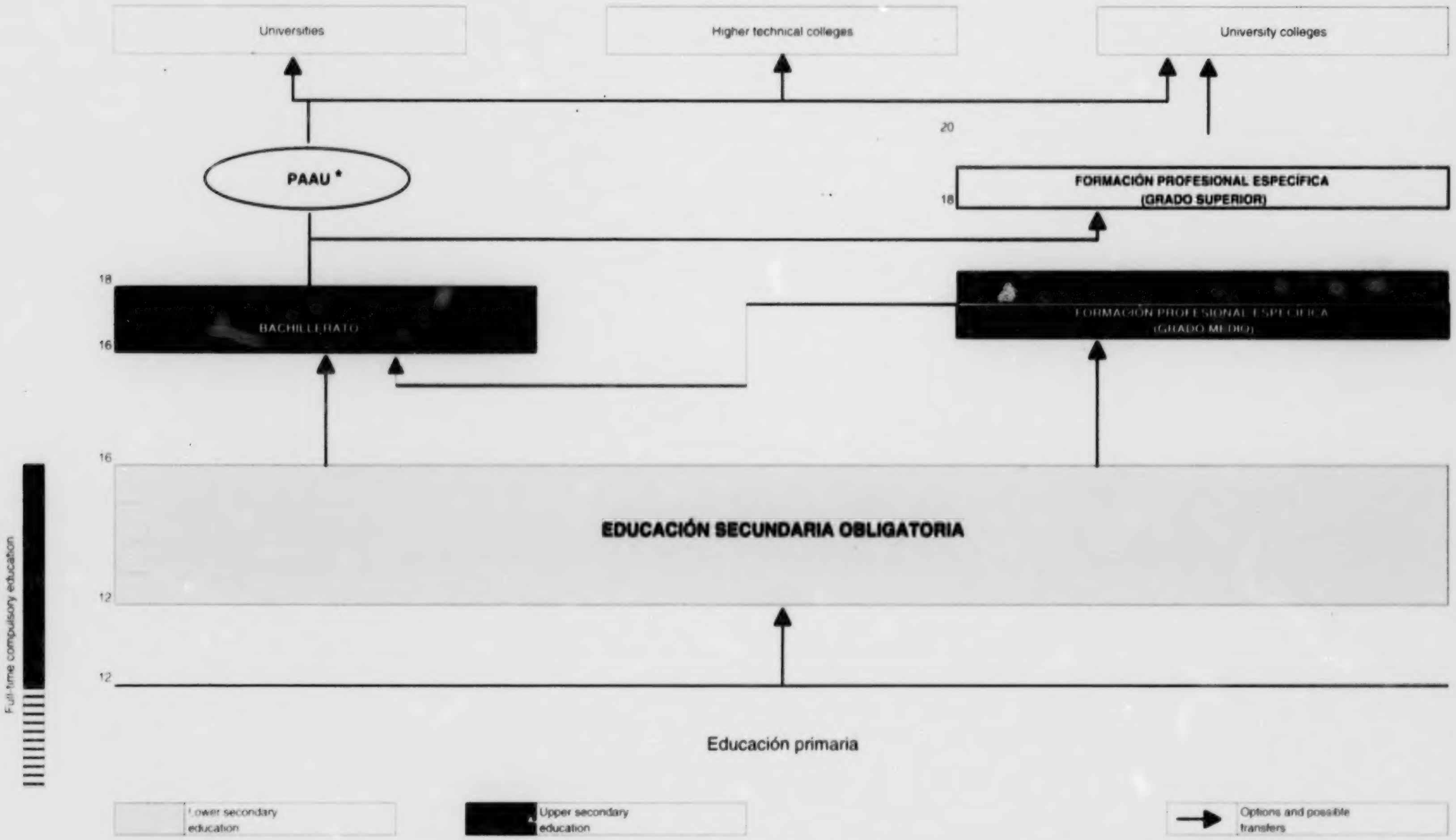
a) There are also religious and musical *Gymnasia* and *Gymnasia* with sports departments. Evening *Gymnasia* provide equivalent education for those aged 14 or over and who are already in employment.
b) The duration of part-time education is 3 years.
c) There are also classical, religious and musical *Lykeia* and some with sports departments.
d) The duration of part-time education is 4 years.

Source: Eurydice.

Table 14. Structures of secondary education in SPAIN (post-reform), 1995/96.

	Educación secundaria obligatoria	*Bachillerato*	*Formación profesional específica de grado medio*
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary
General objectives	Transmit the fundamental aspects of culture, teach pupils to fulfil their duties and to exercise their rights, as well as prepare them for employment and for specific vocational training at intermediate level	Foster intellectual and emotional maturity, as well as provide the knowledge and skills which allow pupils to fulfil their social functions competently and responsibly. To prepare them to follow higher studies, whether academic or vocational	Prepare pupils for employment by providing a varied training which enables them to adapt to the changing vocational requirements they are likely to encounter during their careers. Facilitate integration into working life, contribute towards continuing training for all citizens to meet the demands of the productive sector for skills and qualifications
Duration	4 years	2 years	1 to 2 years
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 12-16	Ages 16-18	Ages 16-17 or 18
Access conditions and admission criteria	Access to this compulsory level of education is automatic at the end of primary school	*Graduado en Educación Secundaria* (Certificate of secondary education)	*Graduado en Educación Secundaria* (Certificate of secondary education). Pupils of at least 18 years may also enrol if they pass a specially designed entrance examination
Certificates awarded	*Graduado en Educación Secundaria* (Certificate of secondary education)	*Bachiller* certificate	Technician's certificate *(Técnico)*
Further educational and career options	*Bachillerato* or intermediate level vocational training	Higher education or higher level vocational training	Employment or *Bachillerato*
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time and sandwich courses

Secondary education in the Spanish education system (post-reform), 1995/96


Universities
Higher technical colleges
University colleges
20
PAAU *
18
FORMACIÓN PROFESIONAL ESPECÍFICA (GRADO SUPERIOR)
18
BACHILLERATO
16
FORMACIÓN PROFESIONAL ESPECÍFICA (GRADO MEDIO)
16
EDUCACIÓN SECUNDARIA OBLIGATORIA
12
12
Educación primaria
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Options and possible transfers

* PAAU (*Pruebas de Aptitud para el Acceso a la Universidad*): to enter university education, the pupil must succeed in a series of aptitude tests to demonstrate maturity and knowledge.

Source: Eurydice.

Table 15. Structures of secondary education in FRANCE, 1995/96.

	Collège	***Lycée d'enseignement général et/ou technologique* (LEGT)**	***Lycée professionnel***
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary
General objectives	Assure that a maximum number of pupils achieve the level of general education necessary at the end of the 3rd class (4th year) to move on to the *Lycée* (LEGT or LP). Otherwise, give each pupil at least a general basic education and an initial vocational training preparing for 5th year certificates: *Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle* (CAP) or *Brevet d'études professionnelles* (BEP)	Provide education leading to the general *Baccalauréat*, the technological *Baccalauréat*, or to the *Brevet de technicien* (technical certificate)	Allow *Collège* leavers to obtain a general, technological and vocational education leading to qualifications which allow direct access to employment in a specific occupation
Duration	4 years	3 years	2 years or (for the vocational *Baccalauréat*) 4 years
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 11-15	Ages 15-18	Ages 15-17 (19)
Access conditions and admission criteria	All children who complete the consolidation stage of primary school are admitted to the 6th class (1st year) by the age of 12 at the latest [25]	Admission is based on the direction of studies chosen and the wishes of the family, enrolment of the pupil in the school by the family [26]	Admission is based on the direction of studies chosen and the wishes of the family, enrolment of the pupil in the school by the family
Certificates awarded	The majority of pupils obtain a general education certificate, the *Brevet*, which is awarded upon completion of the 3rd class (4th year) (but which does not determine promotion to the 2nd class)	General *Baccalauréat*, technological *Baccalauréat*, or *Brevet de technicien* [27] Otherwise, a *Certificat de fin d'études secondaires* for those pupils who receive average marks equivalent to at least 8/20 in the *Baccalauréat* examinations	*Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle* (CAP) *Brevet d'études professionnelles* (BEP) Vocational *Baccalauréat* *Mentions complémentaires* for the CAP and the BEP
Further educational and career options	The 2nd general or technological class The 2nd vocational class (first year of preparation for the BEP) The first year of preparation for the CAP	Access to higher education is granted to those who obtain the *Baccalauréat* The *Certificat de fin d'études secondaires* does not entitle the pupil to enter higher education	Employment for holders of a CAP, a BEP or a vocational *Baccalauréat* Further studies for a vocational *Baccalauréat* (or technological *Baccalauréat* by entering the 1st adaptation class of the LEGT), for holders of a BEP Possibility of higher studies for holders of a vocational *Baccalauréat*
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time, but 'school/in-company' sandwich course training in preparation for vocational certificates

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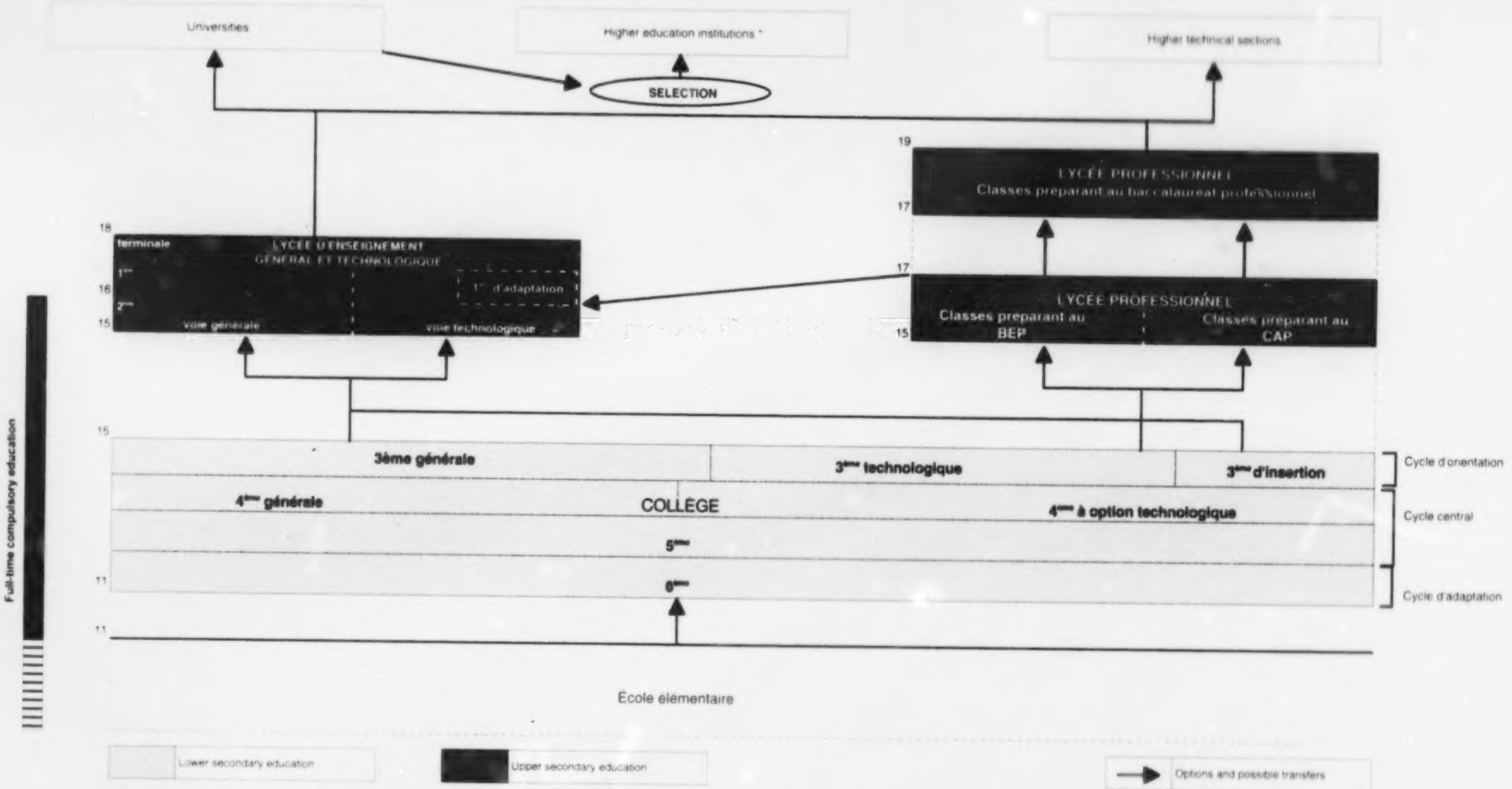
[25] In public sector education, parents are as a rule required to enrol their children in the *collège* of the school area in which they live (geographical catchment area for a given *collège*). If a *collège* does not offer certain courses, especially in choice of first foreign language, exceptions can be granted allowing parents to send their children to another *collège* which does.

[26] Pupils generally move on from *collège* to a *lycée* in their school district (geographical zone covering several catchment areas), unless their chosen option or specialisation requires attending an institution further away. There are several exceptions to the school district assignment rules. Limited experiments have been set up allowing families the opportunity to choose from several schools.

[27] In the medium term, it is intended that the *Brevets de technicien* will be converted into technological or vocational *Baccalauréats*.

Secondary education in the French education system, 1995/96


Universities
Higher education institutions *
SELECTION
Higher technical sections
19
LYCÉE PROFESSIONNEL
Classes préparant au baccalauréat professionnel
17
18
terminale
LYCÉE D'ENSEIGNEMENT GÉNÉRAL ET TECHNOLOGIQUE
1ère
16
2nde
15
1ère d'adaptation
voie générale
voie technologique
17
LYCÉE PROFESSIONNEL
Classes préparant au BEP
Classes préparant au CAP
15
Full-time compulsory education
15
3ème générale
3ème technologique
3ème d'insertion
Cycle d'orientation
4ème générale
COLLÈGE
4ème à option technologique
Cycle central
5ème
11
6ème
Cycle d'adaptation
11
École élémentaire
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Options and possible transfers

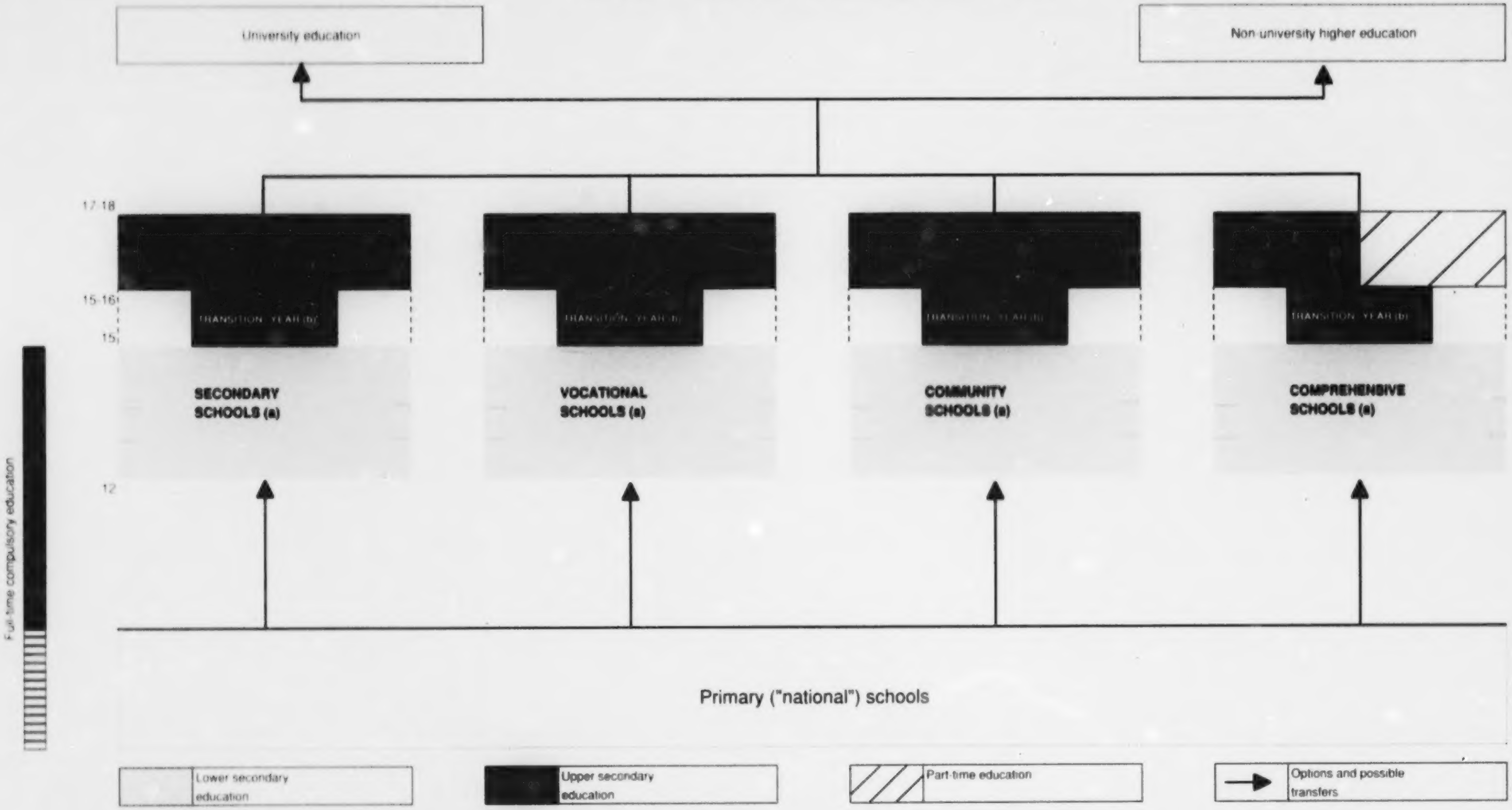
* This category includes very diverse establishments which select students at entry. The most prestigious — the *Grandes Écoles* — recruit, through competitive examinations, students who have completed one or two years of *classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles* (CPGE).

Source: Eurydice.

Table 16. Structures of secondary education in IRELAND, 1995/96.

	Secondary school	Vocational school	Community school	Comprehensive school
Lower or upper secondary	Lower and upper secondary	Lower and upper secondary	Lower and upper secondary	Lower and upper secondary
General objectives	Offer a broad curriculum, including both academic and technical subjects			
Duration	Lower secondary: 3 years (Junior Cycle) Upper secondary: 1 optional transition year + 2 years (Senior Cycle)			
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Lower secondary: ages 12-15 Upper secondary: ages 15-17 or 18 (with or without transition year)			
Access conditions and admission criteria	Pupils can enter the second level of schools when they have completed primary education, which usually means at age 12 Some secondary schools organise entrance examinations			
Certificates awarded	At the end of lower secondary, pupils who have completed the Junior Cycle may sit the examination for a Junior Certificate At the end of upper secondary, pupils may sit examinations for a Leaving Certificate, or a Senior Certificate in certain regions			
Further educational and career options	Universities and higher education institutions (at the end of upper secondary) Employment (access possible as of age 15)			
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time (lower and upper secondary) Part-time (upper secondary)	Full-time	Full-time

Secondary education in the Irish education system, 1995/96


University education
Non-university higher education
17-18
15-16
15
12
TRANSITION YEAR (b)
SECONDARY SCHOOLS (a)
VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS (a)
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS (a)
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS (a)
Primary ("national") schools
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transfers

a) While traditionally the secondary schools provided an academic education and the vocational schools a vocational education, the four school types now aim to offer a varied curriculum which assures a balance between academic and vocational subjects.

b) Not all schools offer a transition year. Moreover where it does exist, it is not compulsory.

Source: Eurydice.

Table 17. Structures of secondary education in ITALY, 1995/96.

	Scuola Media	*Liceo classico*	*Liceo scientifico*	*Istituto magistrale*	*Scuola magistrale*	*Liceo artistico*	*Istituto d'Arte*	*Istituto tecnico*	*Istituto professionale*
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary
General objectives	Offer pupils a common curriculum of general education at lower secondary level, training, preparation for working life, and guidance	Prepare pupils for university and higher education	Prepare pupils for university and higher education	Train primary school teachers	Train nursery school teachers	Prepare pupils for specialised study in painting, stage design and architecture	Prepare pupils for traditional types of work and artistic ouput in industry, using the resources of the region	Prepare pupils for work in particular occupations or to undertake technical and administrative duties in the areas of agriculture, industry and commerce	Train skilled workers whose professional profile responds to the socio-economic demands of the local labour market
Duration	3 years	5 years	5 years	4 years + 1 year to qualify for university faculties	3 years	4 years + 1 optional year	3 years + 2 optional years [28]	5 years	3 years + 2 optional years
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 11-14	Ages 14-19	Ages 14-19	Ages 14-18/19	Ages 14-17	Ages 14-18/19	Ages 14-17/19	Ages 14-19	Ages 14-17/19
Access conditions and admission criteria	Primary education certificate	*Diploma di licenza media* (Lower secondary school leaving certificate)	*Diploma di licenza media* (Lower secondary school leaving certificate)	*Diploma di licenza media* (Lower secondary school leaving certificate)	*Diploma di licenza media* (Lower secondary school leaving certificate)	*Diploma di licenza media* (Lower secondary school leaving certificate)	*Diploma di licenza media* (Lower secondary school leaving certificate)	*Diploma di licenza media* (Lower secondary school leaving certificate)	*Diploma di licenza media* (Lower secondary school leaving certificate)
Certificates awarded	*Diploma di licenza media* (Certificate giving access to upper secondary education)	*Diploma di maturità classica* (Upper secondary school leaving certificate of the Classical *Liceo*)	*Diploma di Maturità scientifica* (Upper secondary school leaving certificate of the Scientific *Liceo*)	*Diploma di maturità magistrale* (Primary school teaching certificate[27] upper secondary school leaving certificate of the *Istituto magistrale*)	*Diploma di abilitazione all'insegnamento nelle scuole materne*	*Diploma di maturità artistica* Upper secondary school leaving certificate of the Artistic *Liceo*	After 3 years: Arts qualification certificate After 5 years: *Diploma di maturità d'arte applicata* (Applied arts upper secondary school leaving certificate for the *Istituti d'arte*) After 2 further years, *Diploma di Maturità Professionale*	*Diploma di maturità tecnica* (Upper secondary school leaving certificate for the *Istituto tecnico*)	After 3 years: qualification certificate After 2 more years: Upper secondary school leaving certificate for the Vocational School (*Diploma di maturità professionale*)
Further educational and career options	Transition to employment without a qualification Apprenticeships Enrolment in one of the types of upper secondary school	All types of university education. Higher education	All types of university education. Higher education	Primary school teacher. University faculties, after the additional year	Nursery school teacher	Advanced courses at the Academy of Fine Arts Architecture courses University faculties, after the additional year	Employment After 5 years, all types of university courses, higher education	Public or private sector employment Independent professional activity Enrolment in higher-level schools or university faculties	Employment After 3 years: two-year post-graduate courses in a Vocational School Participate in other vocational training modules for a second qualification After 5 years, all types of university courses, higher education
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time and part-time evening courses	Full-time	Full-time and part-time evening courses	Full-time and part-time evening courses

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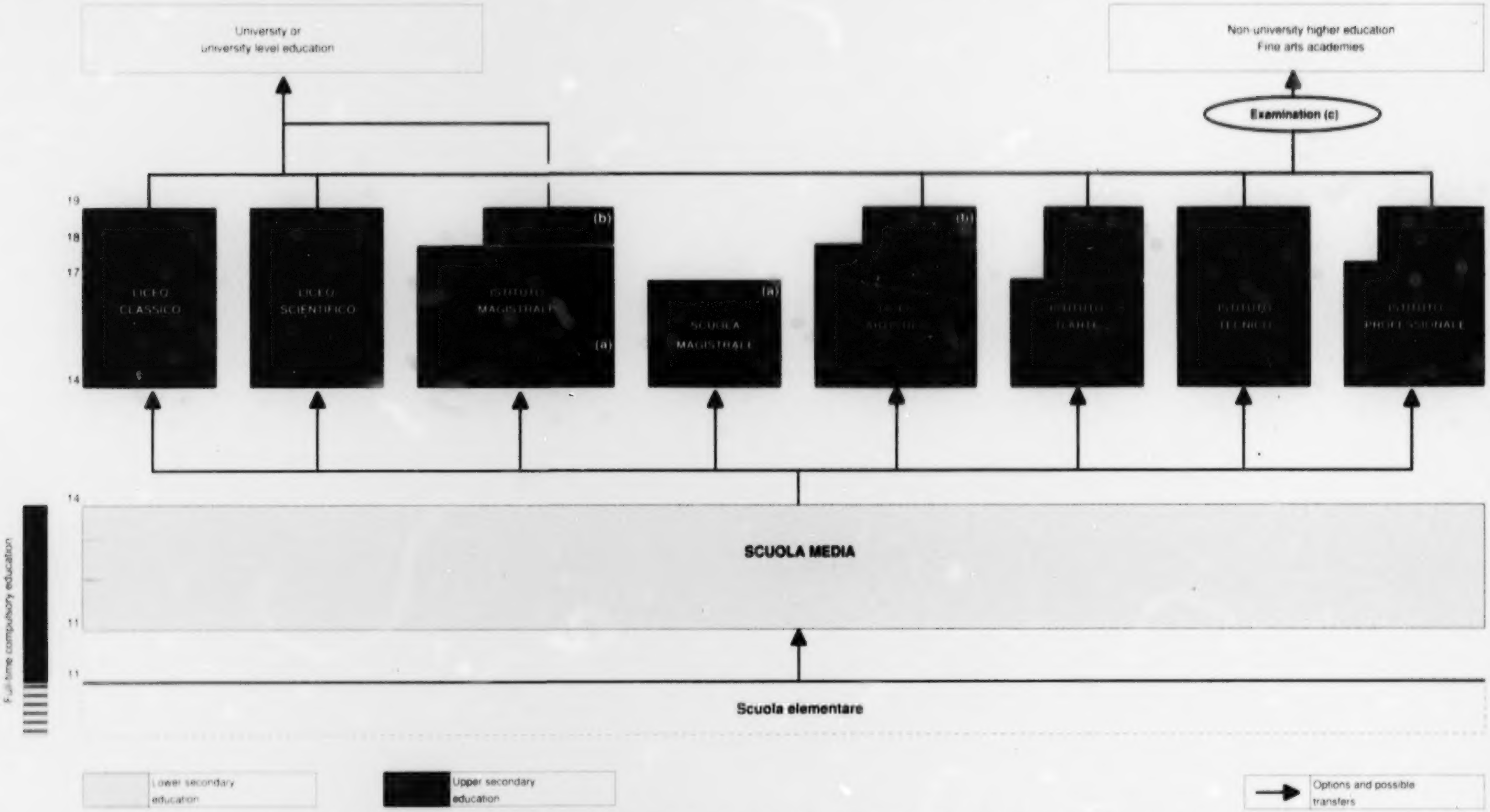
[28] Some schools have introduced experimental two-year courses. Pupils who successfully complete these courses receive school-leaving certificates for the applied arts which allow them to continue studying at higher-level art schools or at university.

[27] The *istituti magistrali* and the *scuole magistrali* will no longer train candidates for the teaching profession. The university system is currently undergoing reform and, in future, nursery and primary school teachers will be required to complete a special four- to six-year university course.

Secondary education in the Italian education system, 1995/96


University or university level education
Non-university higher education
Fine arts academies
Examination (c)
19
18
17
14
LICEO CLASSICO
LICEO SCIENTIFICO
ISTITUTO MAGISTRALE
(b)
(a)
SCUOLA MAGISTRALE
(a)
LICEO ARTISTICO
(b)
ISTITUTO D'ARTE
ISTITUTO TECNICO
ISTITUTO PROFESSIONALE
14
SCUOLA MEDIA
11
11
Scuola elementare
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Options and possible transfers

(a) These two types of schools will no longer lead to teaching careers. A reform of the university system not yet implemented provides for a specific four- to six-year training course for future nursery and primary school teachers.
(b) An extra year after 4 years in an *Istituto magistrale* or a *Liceo artistico* gives access to certain university faculties.
(c) Entrance examination or aptitude test. Holders of an upper secondary school leaving certificate in the arts are exempted from the entrance examinations for fine arts academies.

Source: Eurydice.

Table 18. Structures of secondary education in LUXEMBOURG, 1995/96.

	Lycée général		*Lycée technique*			
			Régime préparatoire[31]	***Cursus normal***	***Régime de formation de technicien et régime technique***	***Régime professionnel***
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Lower secondary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary
General objectives	Prepare pupils primarily for university-level higher education on the basis of an intensive general education	Prepare pupils primarily for university-level higher education on the basis of an intensive general education	Encourage young people to obtain vocational qualifications by focusing on the achievements and potential of each pupil and/or allow pupils to enter *cursus normal* of *Lycée technique*	Expand on the basic education received Guide pupils towards their later training and prepare them for studies in the different branches of the intermediate stage Facilitate integration into working life	Intermediate stage Prepare pupils for upper-stage studies Intermediate and upper stage a) The technician's training branch aims to train highly skilled workers through intensive vocational training, also offers access to higher-level studies in technical areas b) The technical branch aims to train pupils for relatively high-level administrative and technical duties, offers generalised access to higher education	Intermediate stage Teach pupils a trade or an occupation[33]
Duration	3 years	4 years with General stage (2 years), Specialisation stage (2 years)	3 years	3 years	Usually 4 to 5 years (the duration of a given stage depends on the chosen branch and profession)	As a rule, 3 years
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 12-15	Ages 15-19	Ages 12-15	Ages 12-15	Ages 15-18/19/20	Ages 15-18
Access conditions and admission criteria[32]	Up to 1996, entrance examination including language tests for French and German (dictation and practical skills). From 1996, guidance procedures in the last year of primary school	The 'class council' takes the decision to promote a pupil to the intermediate stage on the basis of guidelines it prepares	Up to 1996, pupils must have completed 6 years of primary sc. and must be at least 12 years old. From 1996, guidance procedures in the last year of primary school	Up to 1996, entrance examination including language tests for French and German (dictation and practical skills) and an arithmetic test. From 1996, guidance procedures in the last year of primary school	The 'class council' takes the decision to promote a pupil to the intermediate stage on the basis of guidelines it prepares	The 'class council' takes the decision to promote a pupil to the intermediate stage on the basis of guidelines it prepares
Certificates awarded	None	*Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires* (Final secondary school leaving certificate)	*Certificat de fin de scolarité* (Leaving certificate at the end of compulsory education)	*Certificat de fin de scolarité* (Leaving certificate at the end of compulsory education)	Technician's training branch *Diplôme de technicien* Technical branch *Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires techniques*	*Certificat d'aptitude technique et professionnelle* (CATP) *Certificat d'initiation technique et professionnelle* (CITP) *Certificat de capacité manuelle* (CCM)
Further educational and career options	Access to the upper stage of secondary education	Access to higher education in all subject areas	Transfer to the lower stage of technical secondary education Transfer within the intermediate stage to the vocational branch (ordinary or two-stage apprenticeship) of technical secondary education Employment	Access to the intermediate and upper stage with its three branches: technical branch, technician's training branch, vocational branch	Technician's training branch Employment, Higher-level technical studies Technical branch General higher education, Employment, University courses in general	Employment
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Concomitant system Theoretical training at school (8hrs/week) + practical training in a firm Mixed system 1 year full-time + 2 years in concomitant courses or 2 years of courses full-time + 1 year of concomitant courses Full-time system 3 years full-time

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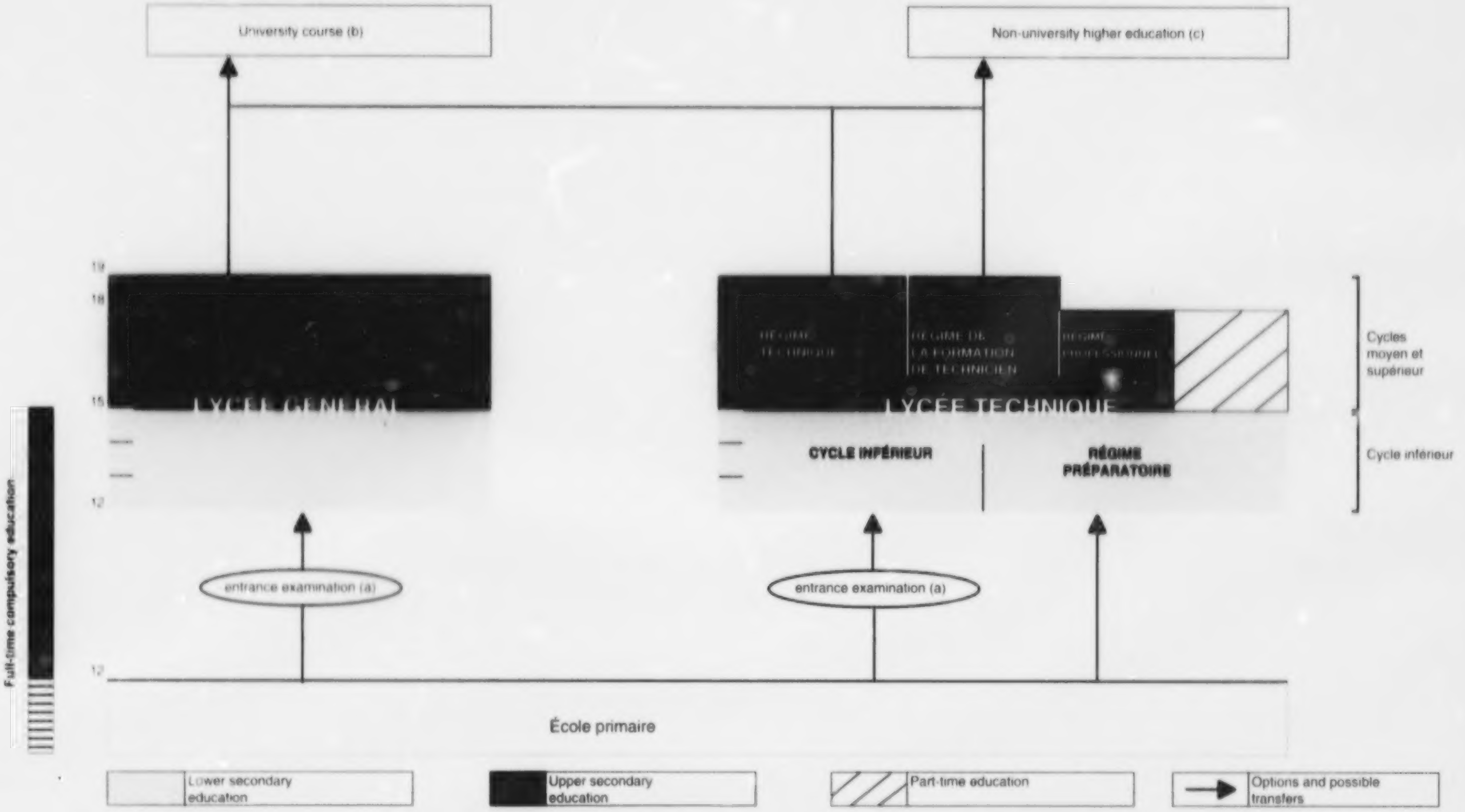
The preparatory branch was introduced by a reform implemented at the beginning of the 1994/95 school year. It replaces the former supplementary courses and will pay special attention to children experiencing difficulties in assimilating course content and keeping up with the standard pace of education.

The reform of technical secondary education takes into account that some pupils are able to learn the practical aspects of a profession but are unable to assimilate theoretical subjects at the same pace. For these children, a two-stage training course called *apprentissage à deux degrés* has been introduced allowing pupils to complete theoretical training at their own pace (leading to a *Certificat d'initiation technique et professionnelle*).

New procedures for entry to lower secondary education from 1996 have still to be finalised.

Secondary education in the Luxembourg education system, 1995/96


University course (b)
Non-university higher education (c)
19
18
15
12
12
LYCÉE GÉNÉRAL
RÉGIME TECHNIQUE
RÉGIME DE LA FORMATION DE TECHNICIEN
RÉGIME PROFESSIONNEL
LYCÉE TECHNIQUE
CYCLE INFÉRIEUR
RÉGIME PRÉPARATOIRE
Cycles moyen et supérieur
Cycle inférieur
entrance examination (a)
entrance examination (a)
École primaire
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transfers

a) Up to 1996, pupils had to pass an entrance examination to transfer to general secondary education. This examination was abolished in 1996 and replaced by a guidance procedure.
b) After this one-year university-level course, students can continue their studies at certain universities abroad.
c) This level of education is offered at several institutions: *Institut supérieur de technologie*, *Institut supérieur d'études et de recherches pédagogiques*, *Institut d'études éducatives et sociales*, short courses of study in management in the *Département de droit et d'économie du Centre universitaire de Luxembourg*; some secondary schools offer the *brevet de technicien supérieur*.

Source: Eurydice

Table 19. Structures of secondary education in the NETHERLANDS, 1995/96.

	Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs **(VWO)**	*Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs* **(HAVO)**	*Middelbaar Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs* **(MAVO)**	*Voorbereidend Beroepsonderwijs* **(VBO)**	*Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs* **(MBO)**	**Apprenticeship**
Lower[11] or upper secondary	Lower and upper secondary	Lower and upper secondary	Lower secondary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary
General objectives	The objective of *Basisvorming* (lower secondary) is to provide broad-based general education in which no strict distinction is made between general and technical subjects					
	Prepare pupils for university education	Prepare pupils for higher education	Primarily prepare pupils for upper secondary vocational education (MBO)	Provide basic vocational education, preparing pupils for their future direction of study	Provide general education and training in specific vocational sectors, prepare pupils for higher vocational training and to take up intermediate level positions in the administrative, industrial and service sectors	Prepare for a trade
Duration	Lower secondary 3 years Upper secondary 3 years	Lower secondary 3 years Upper secondary 2 years	4 years	4 years including 960 hours of vocational subjects	2, 3 or 4 years	2 to 6 years
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Lower secondary ages 12-15 Upper secondary ages 15-18	Lower secondary ages 12-15 Upper secondary ages 15-17	Ages 12-16	Ages 12-16	Ages 15/16-17/18	Ages 16-18/21
Access conditions and admission criteria	An admissions board uses the report issued at the end of primary schooling to determine which pupils should attend which schools			No conditions	VBO certificate, MAVO certificate with special conditions for long courses (4 years), or intermediate courses (3 years) Proof of entitlement to enter the 4th year of HAVO or VWO The Ministry decides on all qualifications	VBO and MBO certificates. The Ministry decides on all qualifications
Certificates awarded	A certificate is awarded upon completion of the *Basisvorming*				National diploma	
	VWO leaving certificate	HAVO leaving certificate	MAVO leaving certificate	VBO leaving certificate		
Further educational and career options	After lower secondary MBO After upper secondary university education or higher vocational training	After lower secondary MBO After upper secondary 5th year of VWO or higher vocational training	MBO or 4th year of HAVO or an apprenticeship	MBO or apprenticeship	After a two-year MBO, option to start a long MBO course After a four-year MBO, higher vocational training Employment	Employment
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time Part-time	Sandwich course training in school and on-the-job

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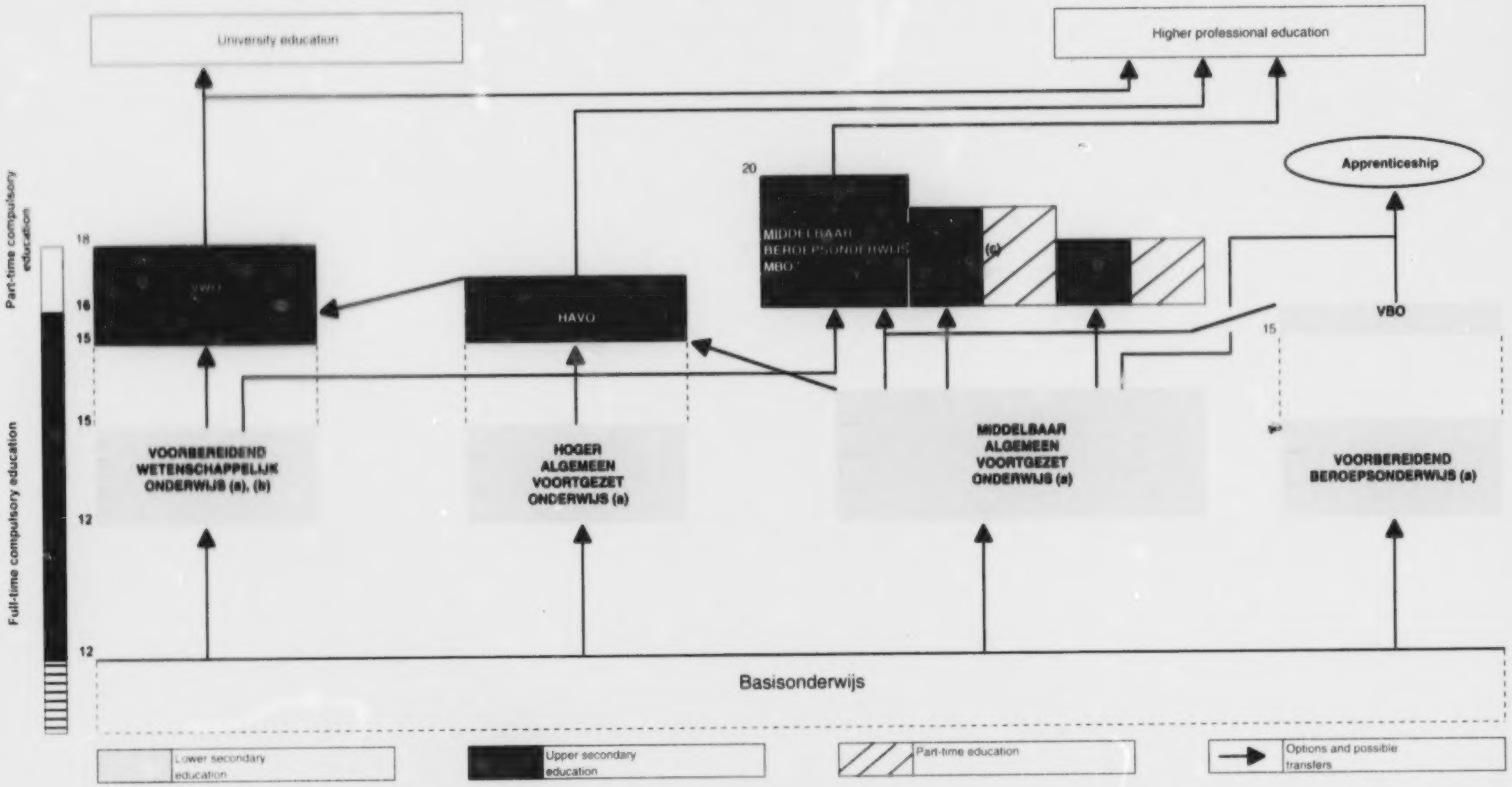
[11] Lower secondary comprises the first three years of the VWO, HAVO, MAVO and VBO and is covered by the term *Basisvorming*. After the completion of the second school year every pupil receives an advice from the school which stream is most appropriate for the pupil.

Secondary education in the Netherlands education system, 1995/96


University education
Higher professional education
Apprenticeship
20
18
16
15
15
12
12
VWO
HAVO
MIDDELBAAR BEROEPSONDERWIJS MBO
(c)
VBO
15
VOORBEREIDEND WETENSCHAPPELIJK ONDERWIJS (a), (b)
HOGER ALGEMEEN VOORTGEZET ONDERWIJS (a)
MIDDELBAAR ALGEMEEN VOORTGEZET ONDERWIJS (a)
VOORBEREIDEND BEROEPSONDERWIJS (a)
Basisonderwijs
Part-time compulsory education
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transfers

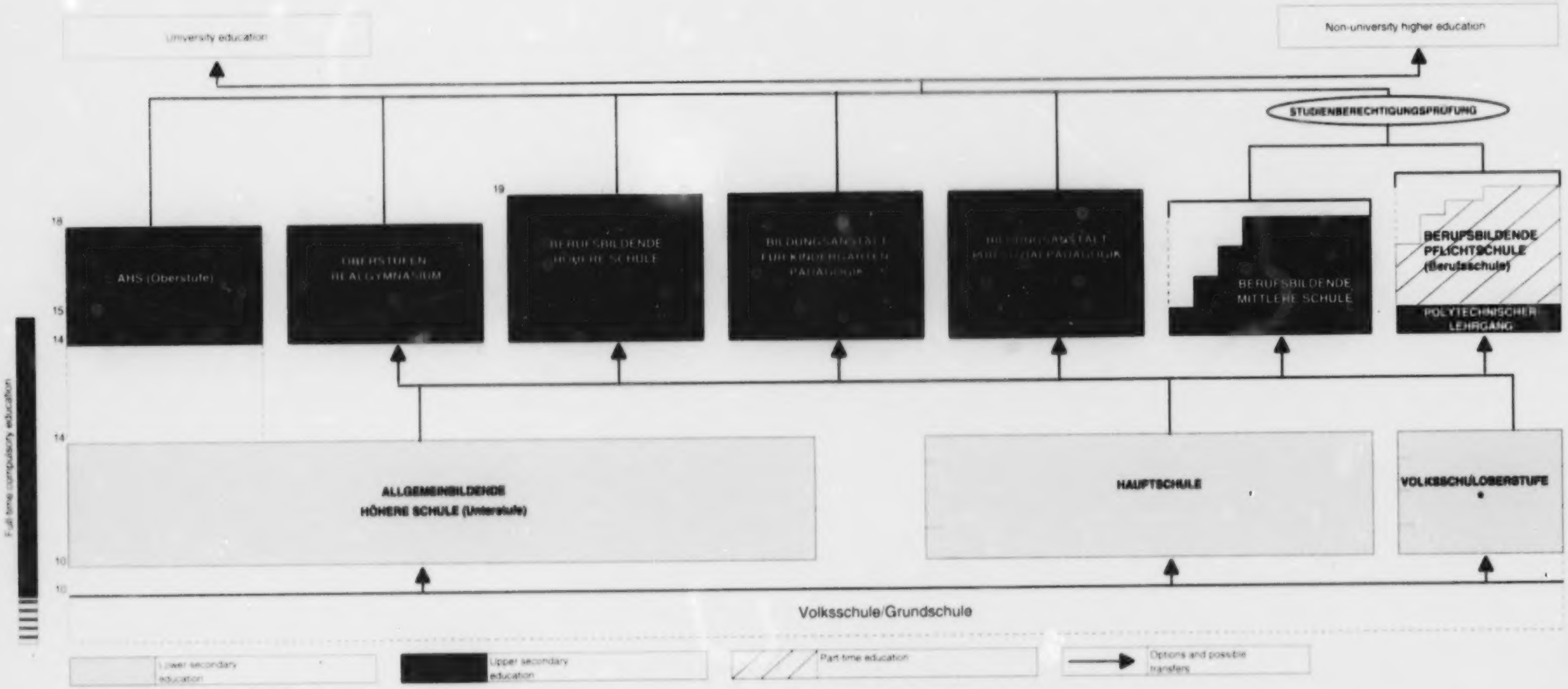
a) Most schools offer three or four branches of education.
b) The VWO consists of three types of school: the *Gymnasium* (where classical languages are compulsory), the *Lyceum* (where classical languages are optional) and the *Atheneum* (no classical languages).
c) The part-time MBO course is governed by the law on vocational training. The full-time MBO course is governed by the law on secondary education.

Source: Eurydice.

Table 20. Structures of secondary education in AUSTRIA, 1995/96.

	Hauptschule	***Allgemeinbildende höhere Schule***	***Oberstufen-realgymnasium***	***Polytechnischer Lehrgang***	***Berufsbildende Pflichtschule (Berufsschule)***	***Berufsbildende mittlere Schule***	***Berufsbildende höhere Schule***	***Bildungsanstalt für Kindergarten-pädagogik***	***Bildungsanstalt für Sozial-pädagogik***
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary	Lower and upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary
General objectives	Give pupils a basic general education and prepare them for employment or for an intermediate or higher-level college	Offer pupils a full and intensified general education leading to the *Hochschulreife*	Give pupils a full and intensified general education leading to the *Hochschulreife*	Provide pupils with basic general practical training focused on facilitating their early entry into employment and preparing their choice of career A pre-vocational year is intended for pupils in their 9th year of compulsory schooling	Give pupils a specialised technical and vocational education with a view to providing a basic theoretical understanding, initial vocational training and general knowledge	Provide initial training for certain occupations as well as general education	Specialised vocational training and general training leading to the *Hochschulreife*	Specialised vocational training and general training leading to the *Hochschulreife*	Specialised vocational training and general training leading to the *Hochschulreife*
Duration	4 years	8 years	4 years	1 year	2 to 4 years	1 to 4 years	5 years	5 years	5 years
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 10-14	Ages 10-18	Ages 14-18	Ages 14-15	Ages 15-17/19	Ages 14-15/18	Ages 14-19	Ages 14-19	Age 14-19
Access conditions and admission criteria	Successful completion of year 4 of primary school (*Volksschule*)	Successful completion of year 4 of primary school (*Volksschule*), receiving marks of 'very good' or 'good' in German, reading and maths The 'teachers' council' can still decide to admit a pupil with 'satisfactory' marks. Pupils can also sit an entrance examination	This school is open to all who successfully complete year 8 (year 4 of the *allgemeinbildende höhere Schule*) and to *Hauptschule*-leavers who obtain good results. An entrance examination is required for those whose results fail to meet the required level	All pupils in year 9 of compulsory schooling can take a pre-vocational year	Completion of year 9 of compulsory schooling and be in an apprenticeship	Successful completion of year 8 of schooling and, in general, an entrance examination	Successful completion of year 8 of schooling and an entrance examination	Successful completion of year 8 of schooling and an entrance examination	Successful completion of year 8 of schooling and an entrance examination
Certificates awarded	*Jahres- und Abschlußzeugnis* of the *Hauptschule*	*Reifeprufungszeugnis* after passing the school-leaving examination at the end of the 8-year course	*Reifeprufungszeugnis* after passing the school-leaving examination at the end of the four-year course	*Jahres- und Abschlußzeugnis* mentioning the end of compulsory schooling	*Lehrabschlußprufung*	*Abschlußzeugnis*	*Reifeprufungszeugnis*	*Reife- und Befahigungsprufungszeugnis*	*Reife- und Befahigungsprufungszeugnis*
Further educational and career options	Extra year (9th) as a pre-vocational year and initial training placement or admission to an intermediate or higher-level college	At the end of the first 4 years, pupils can move on to a *berufsbildende mittlere Schule* or a *berufsbildende höhere Schule* After passing the *Reifeprufung*, entry into university or other higher education institutions	After passing the *Reifeprufung*, entry into university or other higher education institutions	Entry into apprenticeship or admission to an intermediate or higher-level college	Entry into employment as a skilled worker	Entry into working life, entrance examination for higher education institutions	Entry into university or other higher education institutions (*Fachhochschule*, etc.), or employment	Entry into working life, entry into university or other higher education institutions	Entry into working life, entry into university or other higher education institutions
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time

Secondary education in the Austrian education system, 1995/96


University education
Non-university higher education
STUDIENBERECHTIGUNGSPRÜFUNG
18
19
15
14
AHS (Oberstufe)
OBERSTUFEN REALGYMNASIUM
BERUFSBILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE
BILDUNGSANSTALT FÜR KINDERGARTENPÄDAGOGIK
BILDUNGSANSTALT FÜR SOZIALPÄDAGOGIK
BERUFSBILDENDE MITTLERE SCHULE
BERUFSBILDENDE PFLICHTSCHULE (Berufsschule)
POLYTECHNISCHER LEHRGANG
Full time compulsory education
14
10
10
ALLGEMEINBILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE (Unterstufe)
HAUPTSCHULE
VOLKSSCHULOBERSTUFE *
Volksschule/Grundschule
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transfers

* The upper level of primary school *(Volksschule Oberstufe)* provides education comparable to lower secondary schools, but only a very few pupils attend such schools today.

Source: Eurydice.

Table 21. Structures of secondary education in PORTUGAL, 1995/96.

	Ensino básico (3° ciclo)	*Cursos de carácter geral*	*Cursos tecnológicos*	*Cursos das Escolas Profissionais*
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary
General objectives	Provide a modern education that meets, in a systematic and differentiated way, the demands of working life and further studies and facilitates academic and vocational orientation to assist pupils in seeking further training or employment. Offer the individual pupil more options and greater autonomy	Build on the education offered in *Ensino básico* and prepare pupils for higher education	Build on the education offered in *Ensino básico* and prepare pupils for entry to the world of work and for higher education	Give young people a general education and provide technological and practical training in specific areas leading to a vocational qualification
Duration	3 years	3 years	3 years	3 years
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 12-15	Ages 15-18	Ages 15-18	Ages 15-18
Access conditions and admissions criteria	Successful completion of the second level of *Ensino básico*[34] Pupils between 11 and 15 years old who have completed a level of schooling equivalent to the end of the second level	Successful completion of *Ensino básico* or hold an equivalent qualification	Successful completion of *Ensino básico* or hold an equivalent qualification	Successful completion of *Ensino básico* or hold an equivalent qualification
Certificates awarded	Certificate of *Ensino básico*	Secondary school leaving certificate	Secondary school leaving certificate + vocational qualification certificate level III	Diploma of vocational qualification level III and of the completion of secondary education
Further educational and career options	Further studies	Higher education	Employment in a broad range of trades and occupations Higher education	Employment Higher education
Full-time or part-time[35]	Full-time and part-time	Full-time and part-time	Full-time and part-time	Full-time and part-time

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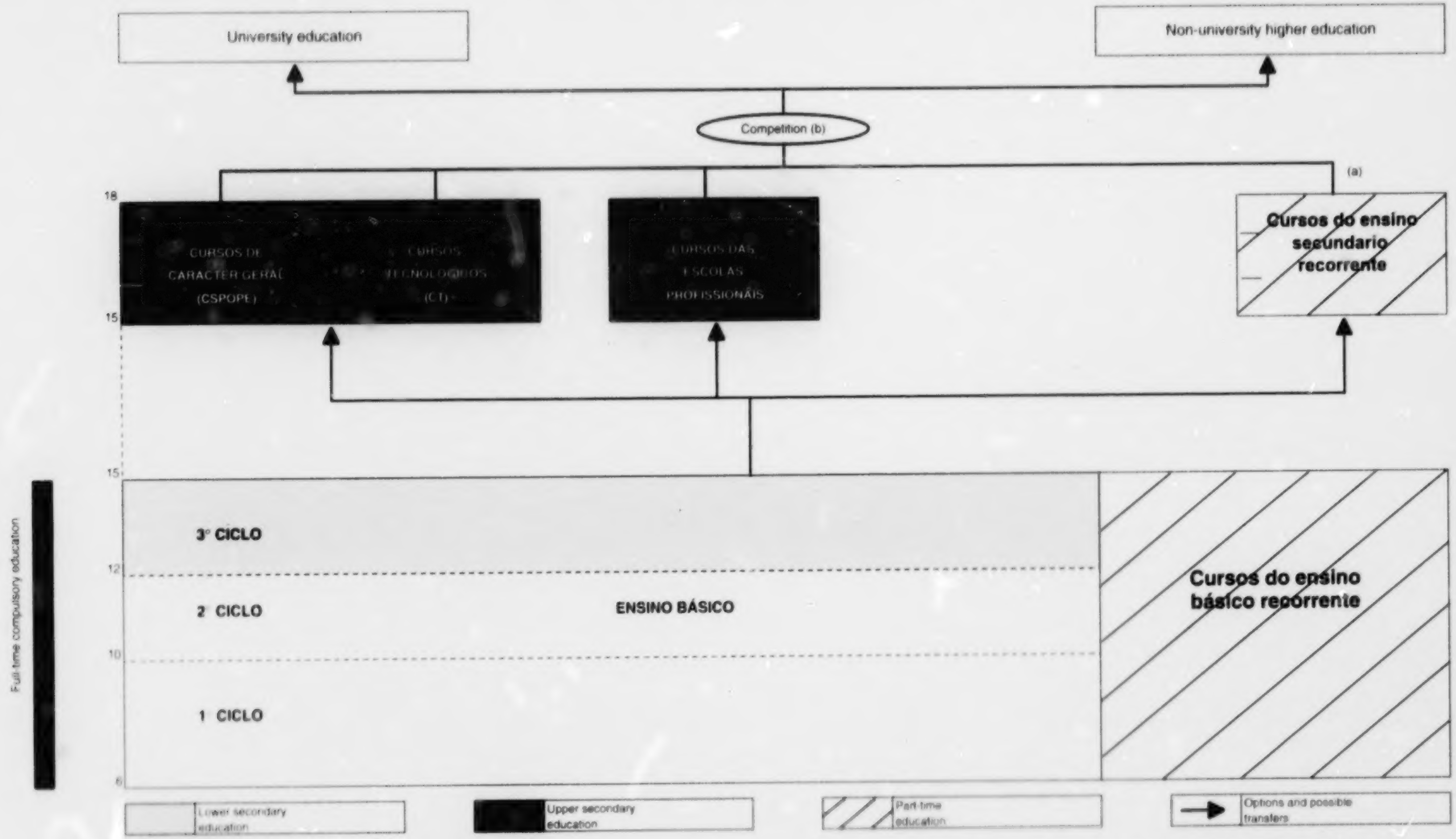
[34] Pupils must enrol in a school located in the district where they live or where their parents or guardians work.

[35] *Cursos do ensino recorrente* are generally provided in the evening for young people over 15 who have not completed compulsory education (1st stage secondary) and for young people over 18 (2nd stage secondary). There is considerable flexibility in all aspects of the organisation of these courses, with the result that evening courses are progressively disappearing.

Secondary education in the Portuguese education system, 1995/96


University education
Non-university higher education
Competition (b)
(a)
18
15
CURSOS DE CARACTER GERAL (CSPOPE)
CURSOS TECNOLOGICOS (CT)
CURSOS DAS ESCOLAS PROFISSIONAIS
Cursos do ensino secúndario recorrente
15
12
10
6
3° CICLO
2° CICLO
1° CICLO
ENSINO BÁSICO
Cursos do ensino básico recorrente
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transfers

a) *Cursos do ensino recorrente* are provided in general in the evening for young persons of 15 years who have not finished compulsory education (lower secondary) or those over 18 (upper secondary). This kind of education has great flexibility and is interdisciplinary in curriculum, methods and assessment.

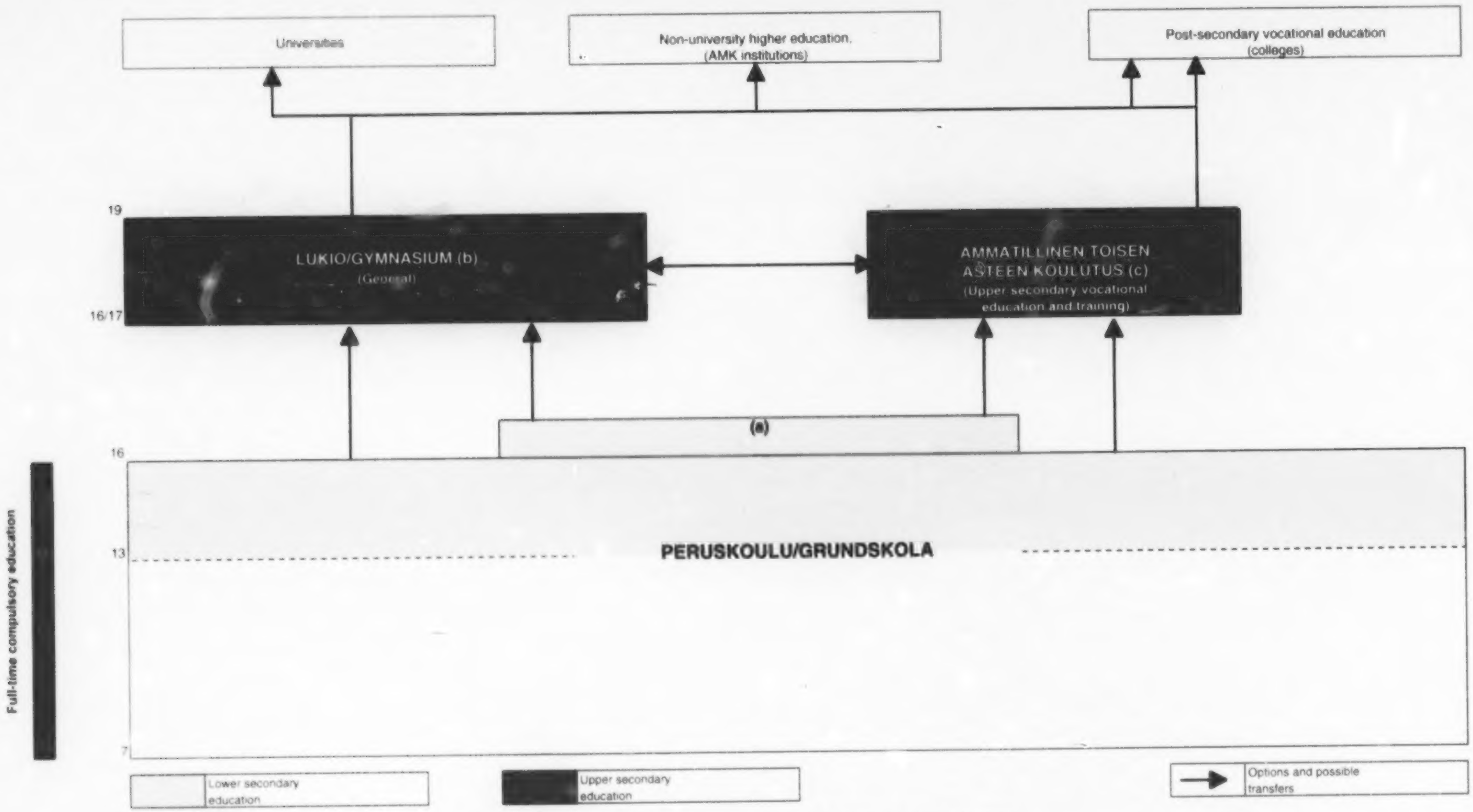
b) Admission to higher education depends on success in a competitive examination. The classification of candidates takes account of their performance in different subjects, some chosen by the candidates and others specific to the character of the examination.

Source: Eurydice.

Table 22. Structures of secondary education in FINLAND (post-reform), 1995/96.

	Peruskoulu/Grundskola	*Lukio/Gymnasium*	*Ammatillinen toisen asteen koulutus*
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary (last stage of unified structure)	Upper secondary general education	Upper secondary vocational education and training
General objectives	Promote pupils' personal development into balanced, healthy, responsible, autonomous, creative, cooperative and peace-loving individuals and members of society. Teach morals and good behaviour as well as the knowledge and skills necessary for life. Organise teaching and non-teaching activities to give pupils the opportunity to develop their personalities, prepare for an active role in society and working life, choose their careers and further studies, gain an understanding of the need to protect the environment and foster international cooperation and peace. Promote equal opportunity for boys and girls.	Promote pupils' personal development into balanced, healthy, responsible, autonomous, creative, cooperative and peace-loving individuals and members of society. Teach morals and good behaviour. Organise teaching and non-teaching activities to give pupils the opportunity to develop their personalities, prepare for an active role in society and working life, choose their careers and further studies, gain an understanding of the need to protect the environment and foster international cooperation and peace. Promote equal opportunity for boys and girls.	Build on the educational functions of the *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* and, through on-the-job training in firms, give pupils the necessary skills to pursue further studies and achieve and maintain the vocational skills they need for working life. Enable pupils to develop their personalities and enhance their awareness of the need to protect the environment and to promote national culture, international cooperation and world peace. Promote equal opportunity for boys and girls. The aim of supplementary vocational education is to keep up and develop vocational skills acquired during upper secondary vocational education or on the job. The goal of special vocational education is to promote the total process of training pupils with special needs, together with the services which support them.
Duration	3 years	3 years, but this period may be shortened or extended to 4 years, depending on the pupil's own pace	2 or 3 years, depending on the vocational course
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 13-16	Ages 16-19	Ages 16-18 or 19
Access conditions and admission criteria	As the *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* is a unified structure, no selection takes place between its lower and its upper stages (considered here as lower secondary education)	A *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* certificate is required. Pupils apply to a maximum of five institutions (general and/or vocational education). Selection is made on the basis of average marks in the theoretical subjects in the certificate. The school can also establish a minimum average. Specialised schools (for the arts, sports, etc.) can give weight to the special skills or hobbies in their section	A *Peruskoulu/Grundskola certificate* is required. Under special circumstances it is possible to accept pupils without it. Pupils apply to a maximum of five institutions (general or vocational). Candidates are selected on the basis of criteria set by the Ministry of Education, including previous reports and practical experience. Pupils are selected by the body responsible for admissions at the school
Certificates awarded	On completion of the *Peruskoulu/Grundskola*, pupils are awarded a school-leaving certificate assessed internally and without a final examination	After completing successfully the minimum number of courses, students receive the general upper secondary general school leaving certificate *lukion paastotodistus*. Students also sit the matriculation examination *ylioppilastutkinto* in at least 4 subjects. On passing, they receive a *ylioppilastutkintotodistus* certificate which confers general eligibilty to enter higher education	Pupils receive a certificate after having completed all classes in their course with at least 'satisfactory' marks
Further educational and career options	General or vocational upper secondary school. Some municipalities offer the possibility of taking an optional 10th year	Universities *(Yliopisto/Universitet, Korkeakoulu/Högskola)*, non-university higher education *(Ammattikorkeakoulu/Yrkeshogskola)* or higher vocational education. Rarely employment	Non-university higher education *(Ammattikorkeakoulu/Yrkeshogskola)*, higher vocational education or employment
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time

Secondary education in the Finnish education system, 1995/96


Universities
Non-university higher education (AMK institutions)
Post-secondary vocational education (colleges)
19
16/17
LUKIO/GYMNASIUM (b)
(General)
AMMATILLINEN TOISEN ASTEEN KOULUTUS (c)
(Upper secondary vocational education and training)
(a)
16
13
7
PERUSKOULU/GRUNDSKOLA
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Options and possible transfers

a) The *Peruskoulu/Grundskola*, an all-through school, can provide an optional tenth year for those who have completed their compulsory education.
b) The duration of studies at the *Lukio/Gymnasium* is between 2 and 4 years. The norm is 3 years.
c) Training lasts between 2 and 3 years depending on the vocational subject area.

Source: Eurydice.

Table 23. Structures of secondary education in SWEDEN, 1995/96.

	Grundskola	*Gymnasieskola*
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary (last three years of integrated structure)	Upper secondary [36]
General objectives	All children and young people must have equal access to education in the state school system regardless of sex, place of residence and social and economic circumstances. The education shall provide pupils with knowledge and skills and, in co-operation with the home, promote their harmonious development into responsible people and members of society. All school activity must be carried out in accordance with fundamental democratic values.	Build on the educational functions of the *Grundskola*. Pupils should be able to take stock of broad fields of knowledge and develop an analytical ability and adopt an increasingly scientific method of working and thinking. Pupils shall also obtain knowledge of international cooperation and global links, and be able to evaluate events from a Swedish, Nordic, European and global perspective.
Duration	3 years	3 years
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 13-16.	Ages 16-19
Access conditions and admission criteria	As the *Grundskola* is an integrated structure, no selection takes place between its lower and upper levels (considered here as providing lower secondary education).	Successful completion of the *Grundskola*. Starting in the school year 1998/99, a pass will be required in Swedish, English and mathematics to gain access to the national programmes in upper secondary school.
Certificates awarded	There is no final examination for compulsory education, but a leaving certificate is awarded.	The leaving certificate indicates the marks obtained in all upper secondary courses. Marks are awarded on a four-category scale: Failed, Passed, Passed with credit and Passed with distinction.
Further educational and career options	Choice of upper secondary studies.	Access to higher education (Universities and higher-level institutions) or employment.
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time

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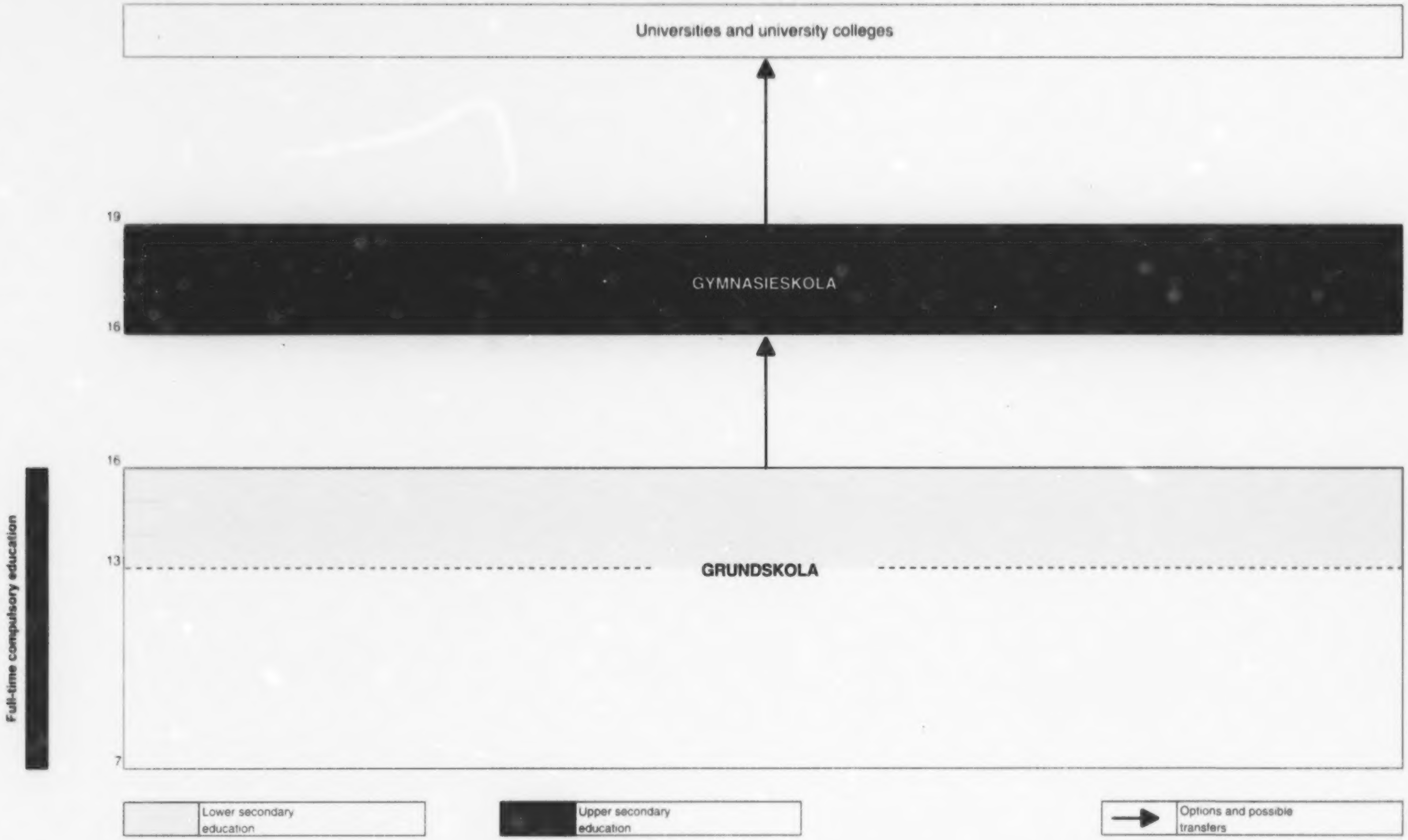
[36] The upper secondary school has recently been reformed and as of 1 July 1995 it is organised in terms of 16 different national programmes. All programmes contain the same eight core subjects. For pupils with special needs or with interests other than those covered by the 16 national programmes, there are some alternatives, i.e. a specially designed programme or an individual programme.

Secondary education in the Swedish education system, 1995/96


Universities and university colleges
19
GYMNASIESKOLA
16
16
13
GRUNDSKOLA
7
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Options and possible transfers

Source: Eurydice.

Table 24. Structures of secondary education in ENGLAND and WALES, 1995/96.

	Secondary school[37]	**Further Education Institution**[38]
Lower or upper secondary	Lower and upper secondary	Post-compulsory, age 16
General objectives	All pupils have a right to a broadly based and balanced curriculum which is adapted to their needs, promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and which prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life	To contribute to the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community
Duration	Lower secondary: 3 years. Upper secondary: 2 or 4 years.	1 to 2 years (depending on the chosen course).
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Lower secondary: Age 11-14 Upper secondary: Age 14-16 or 18	Age 16 normally – depending on the chosen course – although students of any age can be admitted. Students must usually be over the age of compulsory education (age 16).
Access conditions and admission criteria	At lower secondary level Selective schools (commonly known as grammar schools) may include pupils' abilities and aptitudes in their admission criteria. Any school may select up to 15% of its intake on the basis of ability or aptitude. At upper secondary level Not applicable at the start of upper secondary (age 14). No formal qualifications are required to enter the Sixth Form (age 16) but some courses have specific requirements	No qualifications required although some courses may have specific requirements
Certificates awarded	At age 16: General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) At age 18: General Certificate of Education at Advanced Level (GCE A-level) or Advanced Supplementary Examinations (AS) or GNVQ (General National Vocational Qualifications)[39]	National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ) Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC), Royal Society of Arts Examination Board (RSA), the City and Guilds of London Institute (CGLI), the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examination Board (LCCI) GCE A-level and AS Examinations GCSE
Further educational and career options	On completion of lower secondary (age 14): Choice of options for the GCSE examinations On completion of compulsory education (age 16): Continue studies leading to the GCE A-level, AS Examinations, GNVQs at school or in Further Education Institutions (see note 38 below) Training Employment On completion of upper secondary (age 18): Higher education, Vocational qualification in Further Education Institutions. Training; Employment	Higher Education Employment Training
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time Part-time

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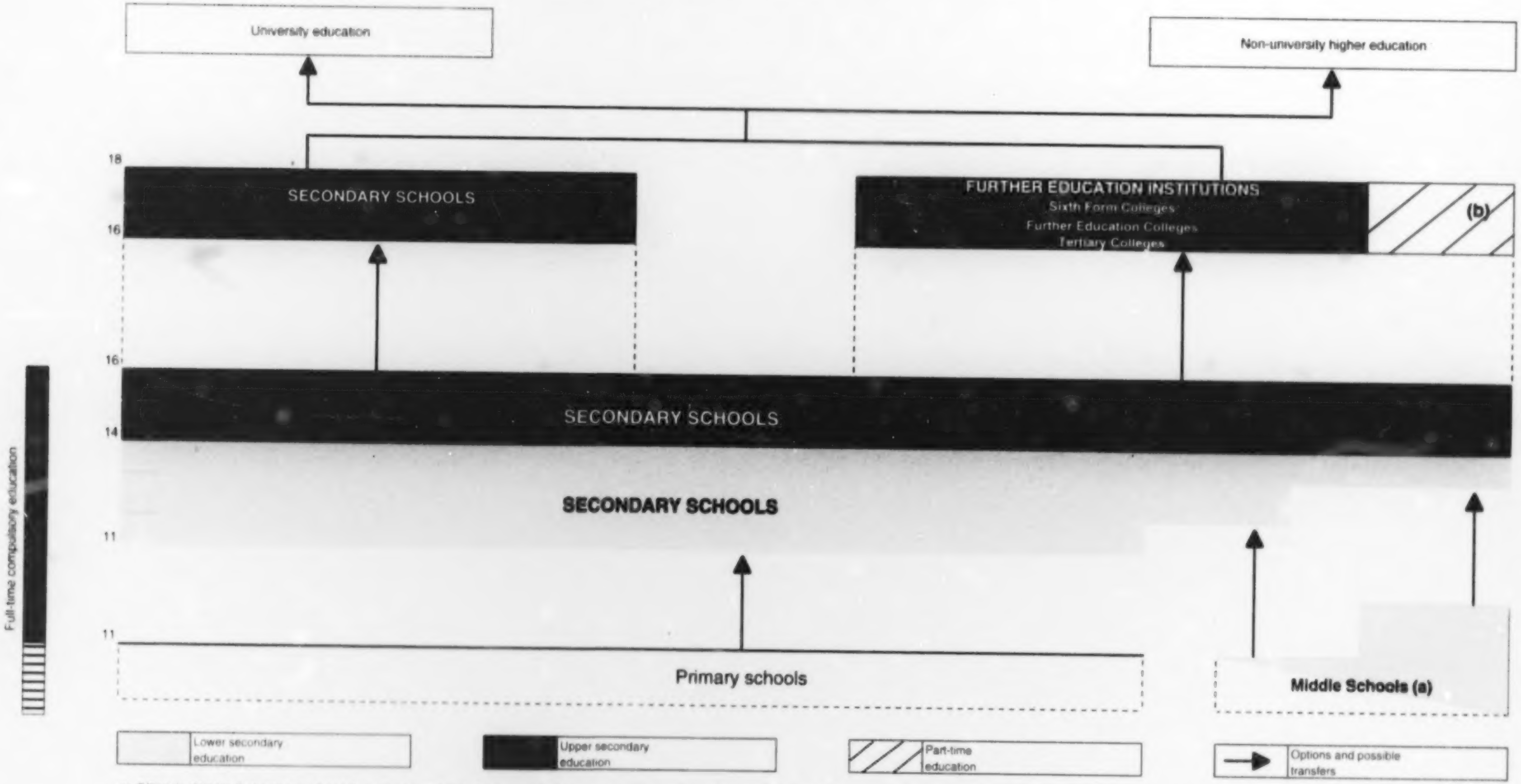
[37] In England in 1993/94, some 86.2% of pupils in publicly funded secondary schools attended Comprehensive Schools, 5.5% attended Middle Schools officially considered to be secondary schools, 4% attended Grammar Schools and 3.1% Secondary Modern Schools. In Wales, all pupils in publicly funded schools attended Comprehensive Schools.

[38] These institutions include Sixth Form Colleges which mainly provide general academic education, Further Education Colleges which generally provide vocational education and Tertiary Colleges which provide both general and vocational education.

[39] One intermediate GNVQ is considered equivalent to 4 or 5 GCSE passes grades A* to C; one advanced GNVQ is considered equivalent to 2 GCE A level passes.

Secondary education in the English and Welsh education systems, 1995/96


University education
Non-university higher education
18
SECONDARY SCHOOLS
16
FURTHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
Sixth Form Colleges
Further Education Colleges
Tertiary Colleges
(b)
16
SECONDARY SCHOOLS
14
SECONDARY SCHOOLS
11
11
Primary schools
Middle Schools (a)
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transfers

a) Officially, Middle Schools are classed as primary schools if the majority of pupils are younger than 11 years old, and as secondary schools if the majority of pupils are older than 11.
b) Sixth Form Colleges generally offer full-time courses; Further Education Colleges and Tertiary Colleges offer both full- and part-time courses.

Source: Eurydice.

Table 25. Structures of secondary education in NORTHERN IRELAND, 1995/96.

	Grammar schools	Secondary Schools	Further Education Colleges
Lower or upper secondary	Lower and upper secondary	Lower and upper secondary	Post-compulsory
General objectives	All pupils have a right to a broad-based and balanced curriculum which is adapted to their needs, promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and which prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life	All pupils have a right to a broad-based and balanced curriculum which is adapted to their needs, promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and which prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life	Prepare pupils for working life as well as for advanced qualifications
Duration	Lower secondary 3 years Upper secondary 2 or 4 years	Lower secondary 3 years Upper secondary 2 or 4 years	1 to 2 years (depending on the level foundation, intermediate, advanced)
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Lower secondary ages 11-14 Upper secondary ages 14-16 or 18	Lower secondary ages 11-14 Upper secondary ages 14-16 [40]	Ages 16-17/18 (depending on the chosen course)
Access conditions and admission criteria	At lower secondary level each school publishes the number of available places and their admission criteria only Grammar Schools may include pupils' academic abilities among these criteria At upper secondary level completion of lower secondary school	At lower secondary level no specific conditions At upper secondary level completion of the lower secondary level	No formal qualifications required although some courses may have specific requirements
Certificates awarded	At age 16 General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) At age 18 General Certificate of Education at Advanced Level (GCE A-level) or Advanced Supplementary Examinations (AS) or GNVQ (General National Vocational Qualifications) [41]	At age 16 General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) At age 18 General Certificate of Education at Advanced Level (GCE A-level) or Advanced Supplementary Examinations (AS) or GNVQ (General National Vocational Qualifications) [41]	National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ) Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC), Royal Society of Arts Examination Board (RSA), The City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G), The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examination Board (LCCI) GCE A-level and AS Examinations GCSE
Further educational and career options	On completion of lower secondary (age 14) Choice of options for the GCSE On completion of compulsory education (age 16) Continue studies leading to the GCE A level examination, AS examinations or GNVQs at school or at a further education college. Employment. Training On completion of upper secondary (age 18) Higher education, Vocational qualifications in further education colleges Employment. Training	On completion of lower secondary (age 14) choice of options for the GCSE On completion of compulsory education (age 16) continue studies leading to the GCE A level examination, AS examinations or GNVQs at school or at a further education college. employment. training	Higher Education Employment Training
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time/Part-time Modular courses

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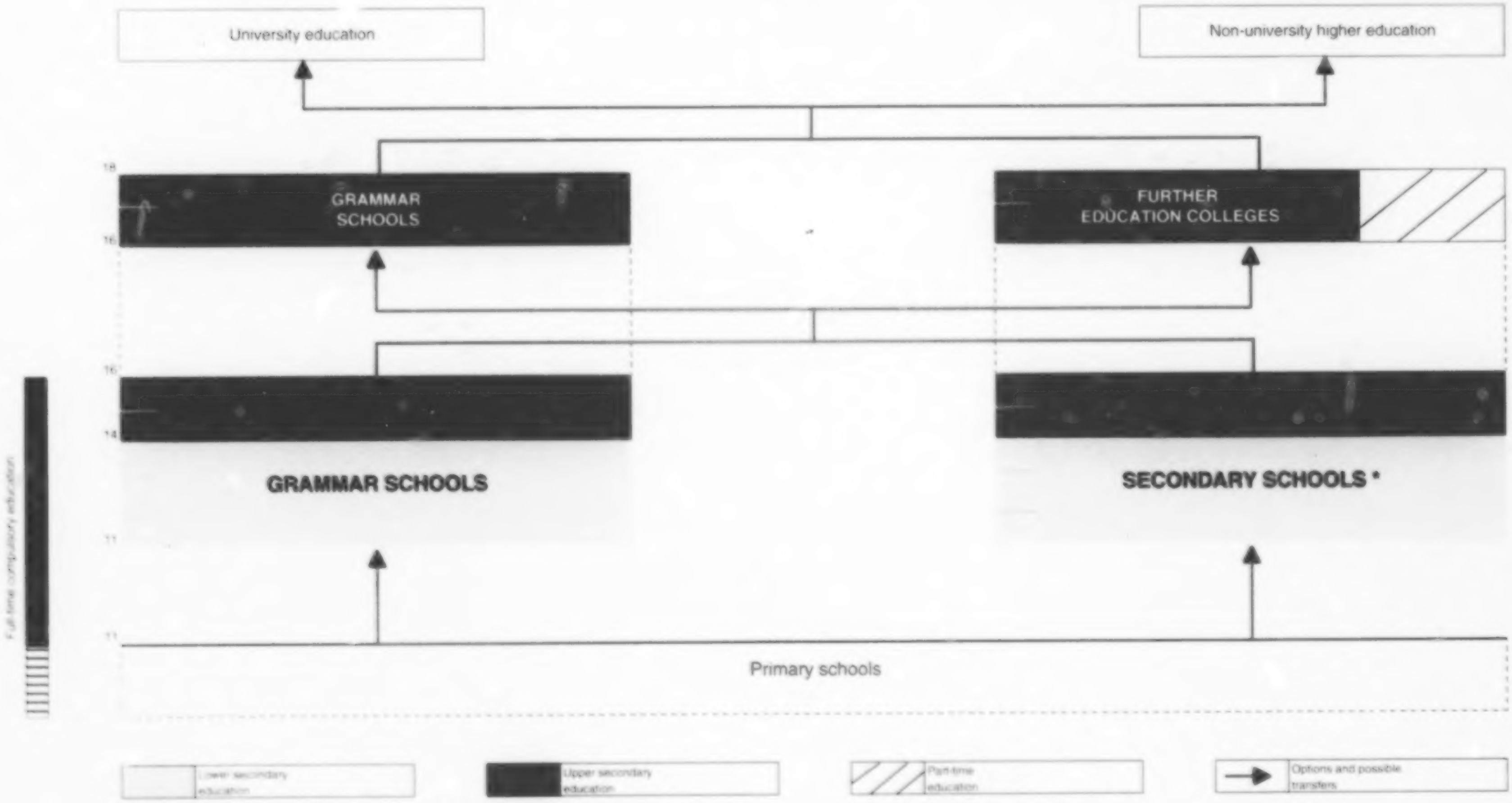
[40] Post-compulsory provision is also made for 16-18 year olds in many secondary schools.

[41] One intermediate GNVQ is considered equivalent to 4 or 5 GCSE passes grades A* to C; one advanced GNVQ is considered equivalent to 2 GCE A level passes.

Secondary education in the education system of Northern Ireland, 1995/96


University education
Non-university higher education
18
GRAMMAR SCHOOLS
FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES
16
16
14
GRAMMAR SCHOOLS
SECONDARY SCHOOLS *
11
11
Primary schools
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transfers

* Post-compulsory provision is also made for 16- to 18-year-olds in many secondary schools.

Source: Eurydice

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Table 26. Structures of secondary education in SCOTLAND, 1995/96.

	Secondary school	**Further Education College**
Lower or upper secondary	Lower and upper secondary.	Post-compulsory.
General objectives	At lower secondary level: Prepare pupils to take their place in society, helping them attain their personal, social and professional aims and meet the expectations of their parents and employers as well as the demands of vocational and higher education. At upper secondary level: As above.	Presents an alternative to courses leading to the Higher Grade or Certificate of Sixth Year Studies. Offers a range of qualifications whether academic or vocational as an alternative to those of schools.
Duration	Lower secondary: 4 years. Upper secondary: 2 years [42]	1, 2 or 3 years.
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Lower secondary: Ages 12-16. Upper secondary: Ages 16-18.	Ages 16-17/18/19 (depending on the training course chosen).
Access conditions and admission criteria	Lower secondary: No entrance restrictions: all pupils who complete 7 years of primary education are admitted to secondary school. Upper secondary: Schools can establish admissions criteria for specific courses and advise pupils, for whom it seems reasonable, to take a one-year course leading to the Higher Grade or modular courses for 1 or 2 years leading to certification by SCOTVEC.	No conditions.
Certificates awarded	At lower secondary level: Scottish Certificate of Education at Standard Grade, National Certificate. At upper secondary level: Scottish Certificate of Education at Higher Grade (5th and 6th year), Certificate of Sixth Year Studies (6th), National Certificate.	National Certificate (full-time or part-time education), HNC, HND. General Scottish Vocational Qualification (full-time or part-time education). Scottish Certificate of Education at Higher Grade.
Further educational and career options	On completion of lower secondary: upper secondary education, employment, further education, vocational education [43] On completion of upper secondary: further education, higher education, employment, vocational education.	Employment. Higher education.
Full-time or part-time	Full-time (or part-time if vocational further education).	Full-time/part-time. Modular courses.

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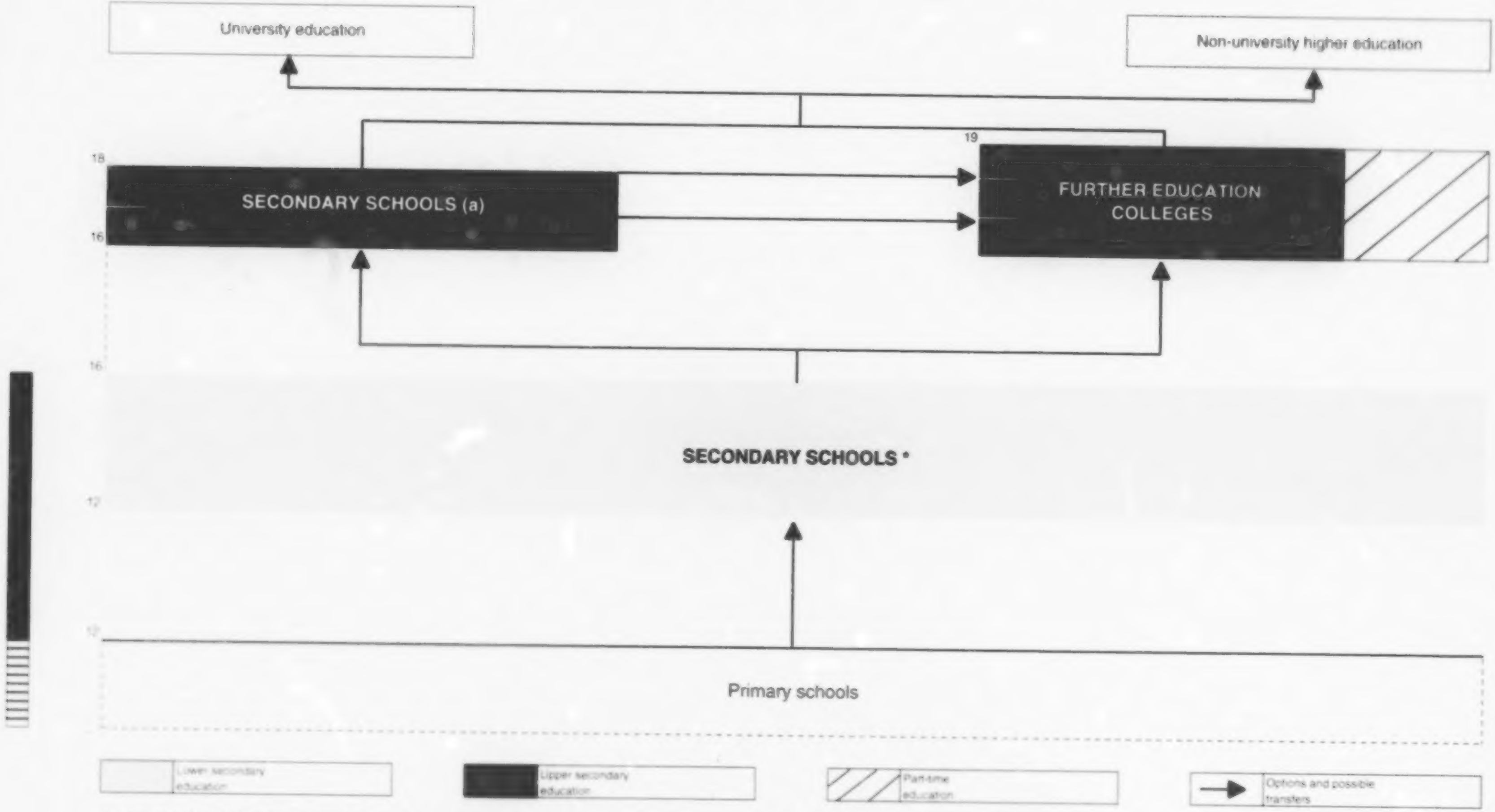
[42] Some pupils who wish to continue in higher education only spend one year in upper secondary school, but this is not common.

[43] The vocational education of young people and adults is provided on the basis of contracts concluded with independent training bodies (often private sector employers). This training lasts two years and is organised in "units of core skills".

Secondary education in the Scottish education system, 1995/96


University education
Non-university higher education
18
16
19
SECONDARY SCHOOLS (a)
FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES
16
SECONDARY SCHOOLS *
Full-time compulsory education
Primary schools
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transfers

* In Scotland, 99% of secondary schools are comprehensive schools which offer all course types for pupils of all levels of aptitude

Source: Eurydice

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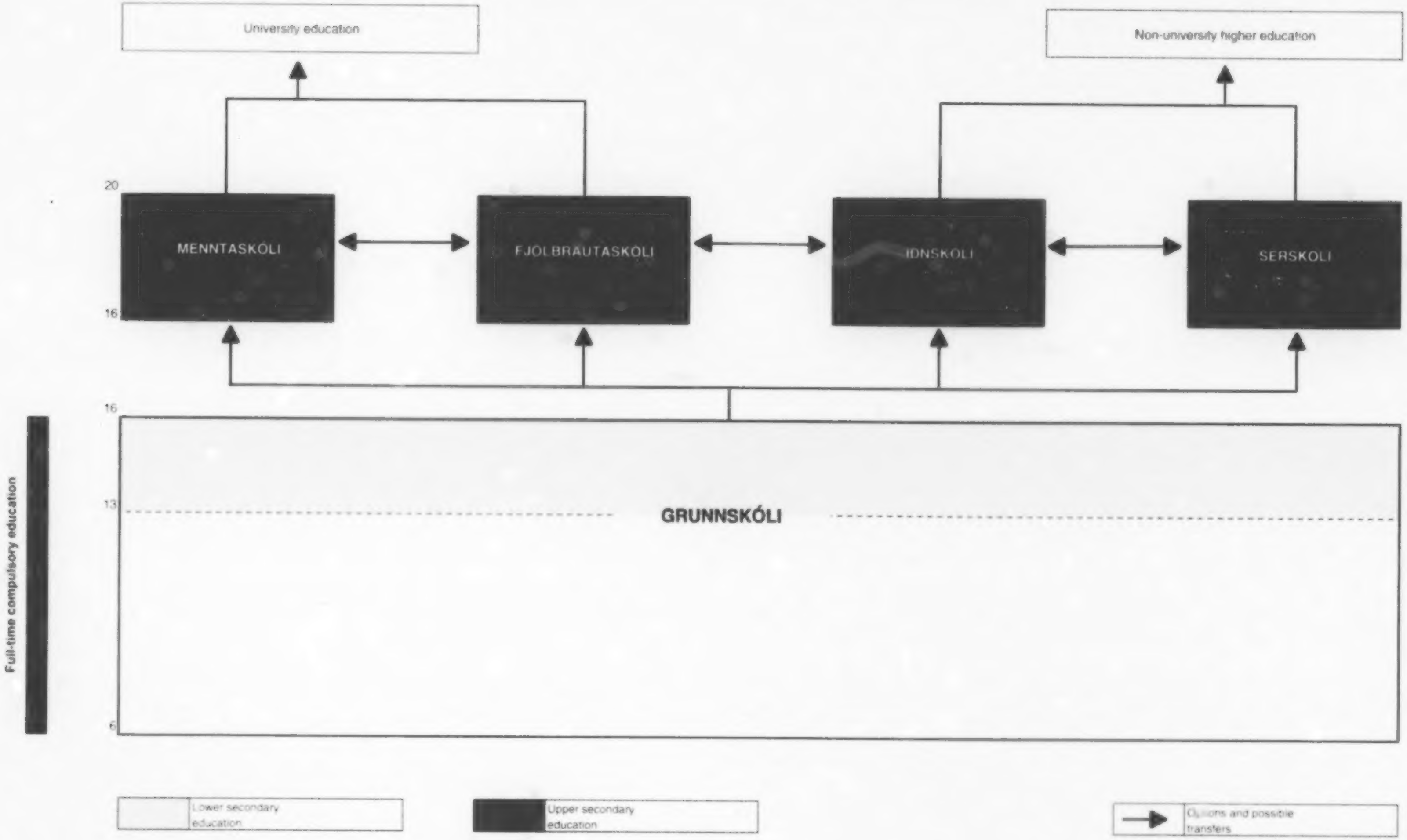
Table 27. Structures of secondary education in ICELAND, 1995/96.

	Grunnskóli	*Menntaskóli*	*Fjölbrautaskóli*	*Iònskóli*	*Sérskóli*
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary (last level of integrated structure)	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary	Upper secondary
General objectives	Acquisition of knowledge, skills, aptitudes, working methods which help each pupil to develop. Prepare pupils for life in a democratic society	Provide general education. Prepare pupils for higher education	Provide general education. Prepare pupils for higher education and for an occupation	Provide general education. Prepare pupils for higher education and for an occupation	Prepare pupils for an occupation. Prepare students to enter higher education
Duration	3 years	4 years	2 to 4 years (generally)	4 years (generally). Shorter courses exist	1 to 4 years
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 13-16	Ages 16-20	Ages 16-20	Ages 16-20	Variable
Access conditions and admission criteria	As the *Grunnskóli* is an integrated structure, no selection takes place between its lower and upper levels (considered here as providing lower secondary education)	Completion of the 10th year of the *Grunnskóli*	Completion of the 10th year of *Grunnskóli*	Completion of the 10th year of *Grunnskóli*	Completion of the 10th year of *Grunnskóli*
Certificates awarded	*Grunnskólapróf* (leaving certificate for compulsory education)	*Studentspróf*	*Studentspróf, sveinspróf, verslunarpróf* and some other certificates	*Sveinspróf* and some other certificates	Various certificates
Further educational and career options	Choice of upper secondary courses	Access to higher education, university	Access to higher education, university and working life	Access to some higher education courses, to other technical or vocational courses and to working life	Access to some higher education courses and to working life
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time

Secondary education in the Icelandic education system, 1995/96

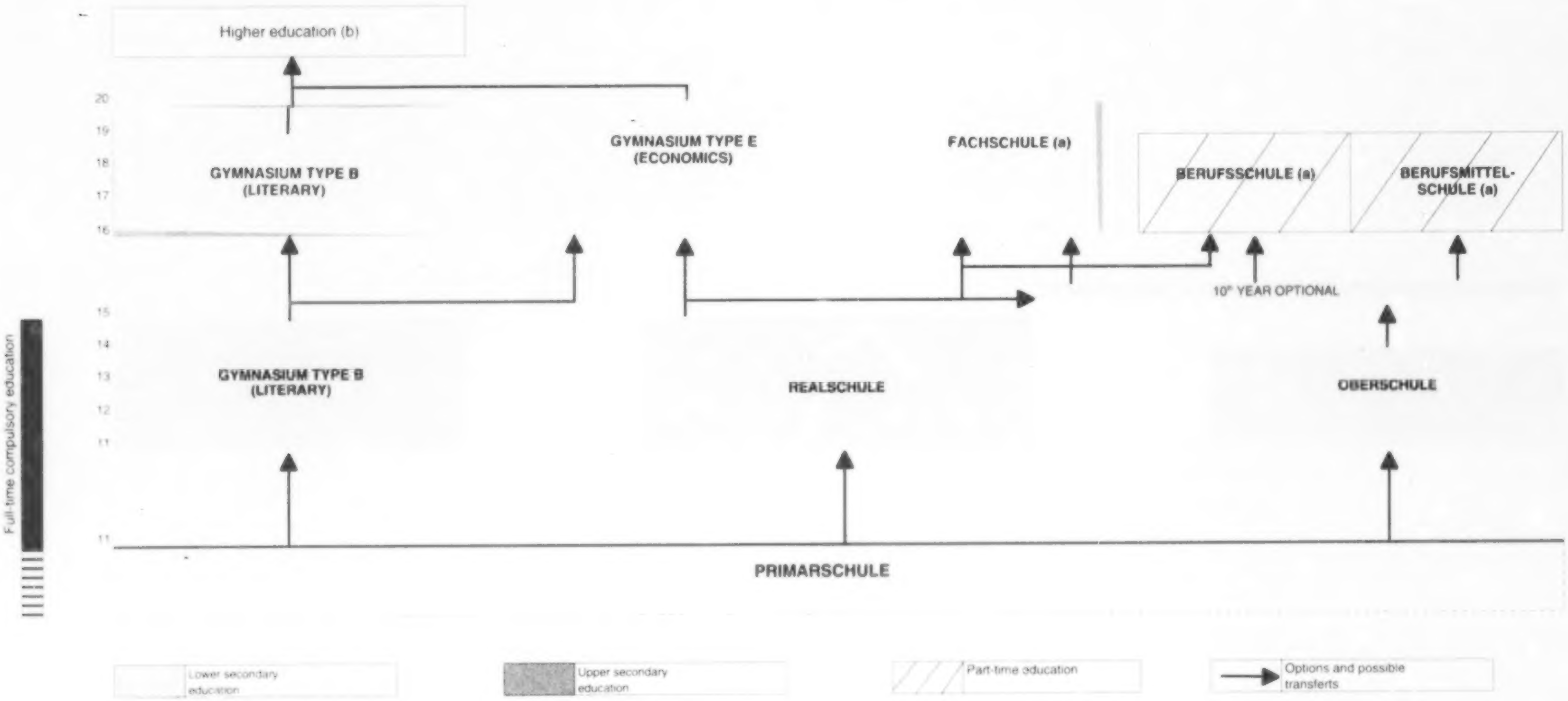

University education
Non-university higher education
20
MENNTASKÓLI
FJÖLBRAUTASKÓLI
IÐNSKÓLI
SÉRSKÓLI
16
16
13
GRUNNSKÓLI
6
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Options and possible transfers

Source: Eurydice.

Table 28. Structures of secondary education in LIECHTENSTEIN, 1995/96.

	Oberschule	***Realschule***	***Gymnasium***	**Voluntary 10th year**	***Fachschulen*** **(foreign countries)**	***Berufsschule + Lehre*** **(foreign countries)**	***Berufsmittelschule + Lehre*** **(foreign countries)**
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary.	Lower secondary.	Lower and upper secondary.	Upper secondary.	Upper secondary.	Upper secondary.	Upper secondary.
General objectives	General education at different levels. Preparation for working life.	General education at greater depth. Preparation for working life or for studies in the *Gymnasium* or *Fachschule*.	Preparation for the *Hochschulreife* and higher education.	Educational preparation for certain paramedical, commercial, teaching and skilled craft occupations.	Vocational training in paramedical, commercial, teaching, artistic, tourism and other occupations.	Dual training in apprenticeship and in the *Berufsschule* part-time.	Dual training in apprenticeship and in the *Berufsmittelschule* part-time. Completed by the award of the *Fachhochschulreife*.
Duration	4 years.	4 years.	8 years.	1 year.	2 to 5 years.	2 to 4 years.	3 to 4 years.
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	12-16.	12-16.	12/14/15-19.	16-17.	16-22.	16-19.	16-19.
Access conditions and admission criteria	5 years of primary school.	5 years of primary school and admission procedures: evaluation of pupils and advice to them and their parents.	1st route: 5 years of primary school and admission procedures (as for the *Realschule*). 2nd route: after 1 or 3-4 years of the *Realschule*, admission procedures or voluntary entrance examination.	9 years of compulsory education.	9 years of compulsory education of which the last 3 were in the *Realschule*, entry examination and/or prerequisites based on school results.	9 years of compulsory education.	9 years of compulsory education and entry examination.
Certificates awarded	*Oberschule* leaving certificate (*Oberschulabschlußzeugnis*).	*Realschule* leaving certificate (*Realschulabschlußzeugnis*).	*Hochschulreifezeugnis* after success in the *Reifeprüfung*.	Leaving certificate (*Schlußzeugnis*).	Pre-school teacher's certificate. Primary school teacher's certificate and *Hochschulreife*. Various vocational diplomas and the *Fachhochschulreife*.	Apprenticeship completion certificate (*Lehrabschlußprüfung*).	Apprenticeship completion certificate (*Lehrabschlußprüfung*) and *Fachhochschulreife*.
Further educational and career options	Apprenticeship (*Berufslehre*).	Entry to *Gymnasium* or *Fachschule* or apprenticeship (*Berufslehre*).	Entry to all kinds of higher education.	*Fachschulen* after entry examination. *Berufslehre*.	Working life; according to type of education, the possibility of higher education or *Fachhochschule*.	Working life; examination for *Meister* and skill in training apprentices; educational and vocational studies.	Working life (and the same possibilities as after apprenticeship) *Berufslehre* and *Fachhochschule*.
Full-time or part-time	Full-time.	Full-time.	Full-time.	Full-time.	Full-time.	Dual system – part-time study and workplace training.	Dual system – part-time study and workplace training.

Secondary education in the Liechtenstein education system, 1995/96


Higher education (b)
20
19
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
GYMNASIUM TYPE B (LITERARY)
GYMNASIUM TYPE E (ECONOMICS)
FACHSCHULE (a)
BERUFSSCHULE (a)
BERUFSMITTEL-SCHULE (a)
10th YEAR OPTIONAL
GYMNASIUM TYPE B (LITERARY)
REALSCHULE
OBERSCHULE
PRIMARSCHULE
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Part-time education
Options and possible transferts

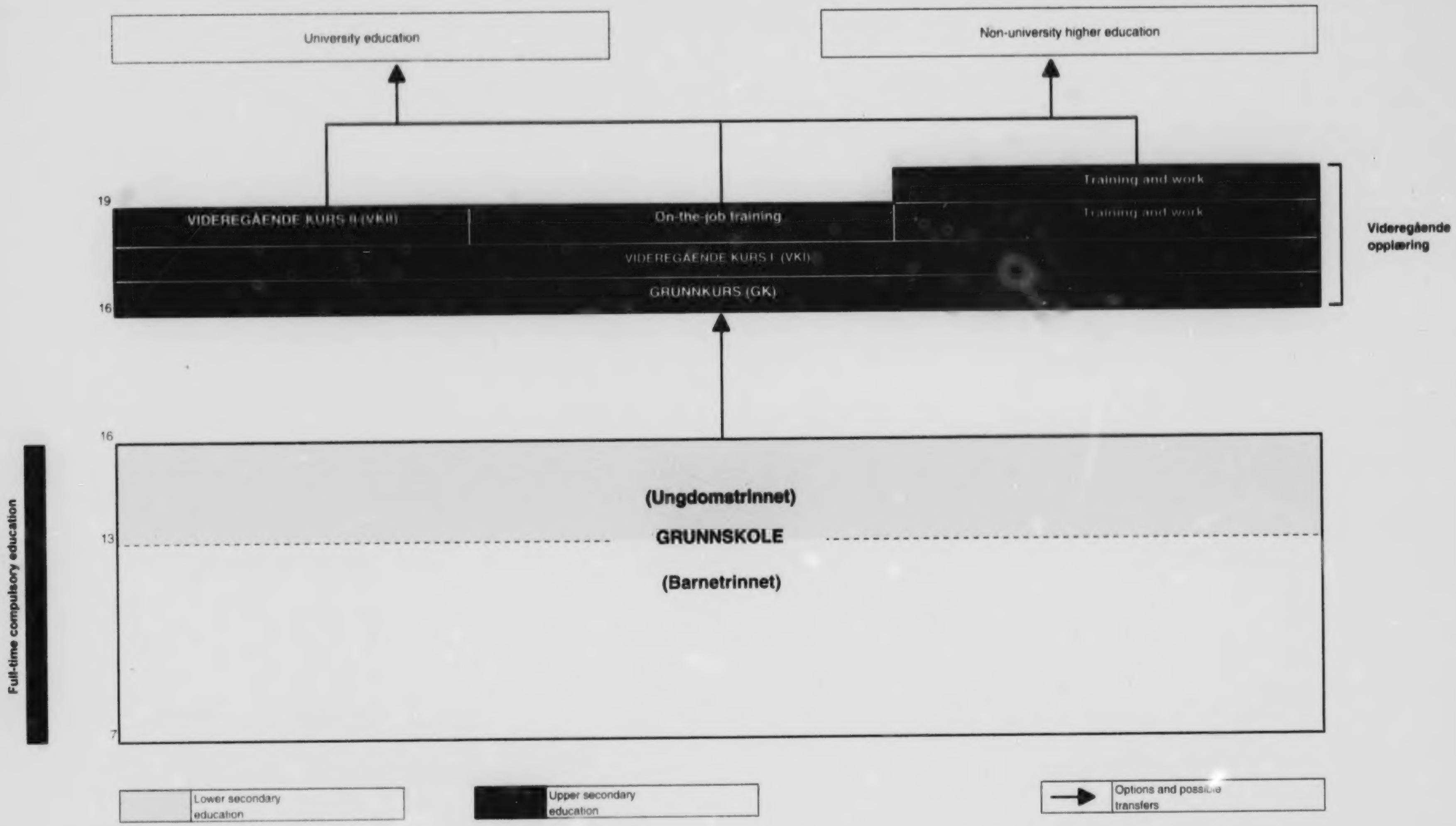
a) These institutions are outside Liechtenstein
b) These institutions are found mainly outside Liechtenstein

Source: Eurydice.

Table 29. Structures of secondary education in NORWAY, 1995/96.

	Grunnskole (ungdomstrinnet)	*Videregående opplæring*
Lower or upper secondary	Lower secondary (last level of integrated structure)	Upper secondary
General objectives	Provide pupils with a Christian and moral education, developing their mental and physical abilities and providing them with a broad-based general knowledge which fosters intellectual freedom and promotes tolerance. Create a framework of cooperation between teachers and pupils as well as between families and the school	Prepare pupils for employment and for participation in civic affairs, lay the foundations for their continuing education and foster their personal growth. Develop and broaden their knowledge and understanding with respect to Christian values, Norwegian traditions and cultural heritage, concepts of democracy and scientific methods
Duration	3 years	3 or 4 years
Theoretical starting and finishing ages	Ages 13-16	Ages 16-19
Access conditions and admission criteria	As the *Grunnskole* is an integrated structure, no selection takes place between its lower and upper levels (considered here as providing lower secondary education)	Successful completion of the 9th year of the *Grunnskole*.
Certificates awarded	When they leave school, pupils receive a certificate *(avgangsvitnemål)* which indicates the subjects they studied, the final marks of their last school year and the results obtained in their final examination *(avgangseksamen)*	There are two types of certificate a) a trade skills or journeyman's certificate *(fagbrev svennebrev)*; b) a certificate *(vitnemål fra den videregående skolen)* giving entitlement to higher education
Further educational and career options	Choice of upper secondary courses	Higher education or employment
Full-time or part-time	Full-time	Full-time. In certain cases, schools offer part-time education

Secondary education in the Norwegian education system, 1995/96


University education
Non-university higher education
19
VIDEREGÅENDE KURS II (VKII)
On-the-job training
Training and work
Training and work
VIDEREGÅENDE KURS I (VKI)
GRUNNKURS (GK)
16
Videregående opplæring
16
(Ungdomstrinnet)
13
GRUNNSKOLE
(Barnetrinnet)
7
Full-time compulsory education
Lower secondary education
Upper secondary education
Options and possible transfers

Source: Eurydice.

2. Educational guidance

Secondary education is an important time of transition when pupils not only have to become accustomed to a new type of educational organisation but also are confronted with ever more precisely-defined options as their educational careers progress. In order to help these young people weigh their options, most countries provide educational and vocational guidance at one time or another and have established guidance bodies and procedures.

Four key periods emerge from an analysis of practices in the various countries. Table 30 presents the guidance procedure which each country has set up for each of the four key periods.

- At the end of **primary education**, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Austria provide their pupils with initial guidance which can take various forms. It may be based on the results obtained from tests developed by specialised educational guidance centres. On the basis of academic results, the teaching team may provide pupils and their families with advice and guidance in choosing possible alternatives. The final decision falls to pupils and their families, except in Germany where the decision is taken by parents, by the primary school or by the school supervisory authority according to different *Land* laws.

- During **lower secondary education (or during the final phase of the single structure)**, guidance procedures are available in a large number of countries (Germany, Spain, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, Scotland, Iceland, Norway). Some countries organise courses on choosing options (Finland, Norway), whilst others offer courses to develop professional maturity in their pupils (Austria), and yet others organise collective information sessions (Portugal). In Belgium, Luxembourg, Portugal, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom (England and Wales and Northern Ireland), an educational and vocational guidance service provides advice in the form of collective or individual consultations. However, in most countries it is the teaching team, either alone or in collaboration with this guidance service, which advises pupils. In Germany, advice is available not only from the pupil's teachers but also from counselling teachers *(Beratungslehrer)* who have additional training in educational science and psychology. There is also a considerable amount of guidance offered by the employment authorities. In Scotland, specialised staff in schools offer personal, curricular and career guidance on an individual basis.

  In Spain during the course of lower secondary education, it is the tutor who fulfils this role, working in collaboration with the guidance service. Pupils have one hour a week with the tutor. Towards the end of the first stage, academic and vocational orientation activities are organised but always in school time. In the Netherlands, a diagnostic examination is held at the end of *Basisvorming* to allow pupils to change direction if necessary.

- After the end of **lower secondary education (or at the end of the single structure)** in most countries, pupils are no longer in compulsory schooling. Furthermore, the number of educational and vocational options open to them is increasing. The choices they are required to make are therefore very important and decisive. It is hardly surprising to note that at this level of schooling, the 18 countries under study offer various forms of guidance which is often provided over a period of several years. Certain countries combine advice from the guidance service with that of the teaching staff (Germany, Luxembourg, Sweden, United Kingdom). In Belgium, France, Italy and Luxembourg, a council comprising the teachers of the class provides advice, taking into account the pupil's academic results, while in Greece this function is undertaken by the teachers' council.

In Denmark, the guidance service offers pupils information regarding job opportunities. In Norway, the guidance counsellor in each institution provides information regarding upper secondary education and jobs. In Iceland, the guidance is generally provided by teachers, but in some schools there are educational counsellors. In Spain, pupils receive at the end of compulsory secondary education the *consejo orientador* (guidance advice), that is confidential, non-prescriptive information on their future vocational and academic possibilities. This paper is signed by the tutor and by the head of the school.

- During the course of **upper secondary education**, most countries offer yet another kind of guidance service. In most cases, advice is provided by the institution's guidance counsellor (Ireland, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Norway), a tutor (Spain), a teacher (Denmark, Austria, Iceland), a team of teachers (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Sweden, United Kingdom), the pupil's teachers and/or a counselling teacher (Germany) and/or a specialised service (Belgium, Spain, Luxembourg, Austria, United Kingdom). Several countries offer pupils a combination of several of these services. The nature of this combination of services varies from one country to another. For instance, in Austria the school psychological and educational advisory service is only consulted when special problems arise. At the upper level of secondary education, counselling is usually of a more vocational nature. In Germany, for example, school guidance services collaborate with local employment offices *(Berufsinformationszentren* – BIZ) to provide career information services. Each local employment office offers special career consultations for secondary school leavers who have completed the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*.

Although the 18 countries under study have clearly established guidance procedures, their practices differ in several ways. The first is the point during schooling when advice is first given; the second is the nature, form and frequency of such counselling (annual courses, *ad hoc* information, documentation, visits to firms); and the third is the individual or body which provides counselling (counsellor, tutor, teacher, an individual or a team, integrated within the school or otherwise).

As regards the level at which guidance is given, various situations co-exist. Since all countries offer guidance at the end of secondary education, only guidance provided at the lower levels of schooling is mentioned here. Four countries – Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Austria – offer guidance at the end of primary education and again at the end of lower secondary education. Germany provides both this and guidance throughout secondary education.

In other countries (Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, United Kingdom), there is no guidance phase during the transition from primary education to lower secondary education. Indeed, the first real guidance phase only occurs at the end of lower secondary education, even though in certain countries like France and Scotland, guidance is available during lower secondary education.

Table 30. Guidance procedures used during secondary schooling, 1995/96.

	At the end of primary education	During the course of lower secondary education	At the end of lower secondary education or of the single structure	During the course of upper secondary education
B	Depends on academic results. Opinion of a psycho-medico-social centre (PMS). At the discretion of the parents and child. The pupil may be enrolled in the first year in a 'reception' class and then guided either to the normal 1st year (class A) or to the 2nd year of vocational education.	Opinion of the 'class council' and at the discretion of the parents and child.	Depends on results obtained. Opinion of the 'class council' and of the PMS. At the discretion of the parents and child.	Depends on results obtained. Opinion of the 'class council' and of the PMS. At the discretion of the parents and child.
DK	Educational and vocational guidance is a compulsory topic in the 1st to 9th years, and it is optional in the 10th year. The aim is to make pupils aware of their own abilities and options in relation to opportunities for further education and jobs after leaving school, and to inform them of the conditions and terms currently in operation in the educational field and in the labour market.		Visits to educational establishments, firms, training placements, distribution of brochures, courses organised by the guidance services.	Collective and individual guidance in each type of school (by a teacher or person appointed by the teachers).
D	Regulation of the transition to secondary education differs according to *Land* law. The assessment of the primary school is taken as the basis of decision or is used for guidance in deciding the pupil's future school career. In all cases there is detailed consultation with parents. The final decision is taken by parents, by the secondary school or by the school supervisory authority.	School career advice includes consultation not only over a possible switch to another school type and over which educational path to pursue but also the counselling of pupils on vocational qualifications offered by the education system. The school guidance services collaborate with local employment offices to provide pupils with vocational guidance.	The same possibilities as during the course of lower secondary education. The choice of individual educational path depends on leaving certificate or qualification, (qualification after year 9, qualification after year 10 or entitlement to proceed to the *gymnasiale Oberstufe)*. Guidance and counselling are also available from the local employment office *(Berufsberatung)*.	Local employment offices offer special careers consultations for secondary school leavers who have completed the upper level of the *Gymnasium* or vocational education and training.
EL	No specialised guidance.	No specialised guidance.	School vocational guidance (SEP) takes the form of courses during the third year of *gymnasio* and the first and second year at secondary school. This course consists of a discussion organised in class or of visits to workplaces.	No specialised guidance. Guidance sessions during the second year.
E	No specialised guidance.	Tutor and guidance service.	Tutor and guidance service which provide advice on possible alternatives.	Tutor and guidance service. Guidance sessions in the last year of upper secondary education.
F	No specialised guidance.	No specialised guidance.	Guidance proposal by the 'class council' and decision by the school head.	At the end of the second general and technological year, guidance proposal submitted by family. Opinion of the 'class council'. Decision taken by the school head after consultation with the pupil and family.
IRL	No specialised guidance.	No specialised guidance.	There are Guidance Teachers who provide advice about possible alternatives, working methods and job search techniques.	
I	No specialised guidance.	No specialised guidance.	Opinion of the 'class council 'or teacher co-ordinators.	Advice of the commission in charge of *Esame di maturità*.
L	ORIKA ('Guidance for children') project to familiarise young people with secondary education alternatives. Opinion of the educational psychology and guidance centre (CPOS).	Pupil guidance provided by the SPOS (Educational psychology and guidance department).	Opinion of the 'class council' and of the SPOS (guidance profile) on the basis of the marks obtained and of the pupil's choice of vocational and educational career.	Pupil guidance provided by the SPOS.

Table 30. Guidance procedures used during secondary schooling, 1995/96.

	At the end of primary education	During the course of lower secondary education	At the end of lower secondary education or of the single structure	During the course of upper secondary education
NL	Decision by the admissions board of the receiving institution on the basis of the results obtained in tests in the final year of the primary school. This board is comprised of the school head and of teachers from the receiving institution, to which may be added the director and teachers from the original primary school. The test of the CITO (National educational evaluation institute) is used by 70% of primary schools.	At the end of the second year, the competent authority advises pupils on their future options.	No specialised guidance.	No specialised guidance.
A	Depends on academic results. Recommendations to parents by the school head. Parents may consult the school psychological and educational advisory service (individualised advice and aptitude tests).	In each school there is a teacher in charge of guidance *(Schülerberater)*. In the event of major problems, he refers to the school psychological and educational advisory service. Some schools offer specialised courses to promote vocational awareness.	In each school there is a teacher in charge of guidance *(Schülerberater)*. Concerning individualised advice and aptitude tests, he refers to the school psychological and educational advisory service. He also refers to careers information centres (BIZ).	In each school there is a teacher in charge of guidance *(Schülerberater* or *Bildungsberater)*. In the event of major problems, he refers to the school psychological and educational advisory service.
P	Information session organised by guidance counsellors (mainly for pupils in their 9th year) and pupil consultation on either an individual or group basis.			Educational and vocational information session; consultation on either an individual or group basis; study visits, placements and contacts with business.
FIN	Guidance in choosing options in the following stages.	Guidance by educational counsellors to include vocational guidance. Visits to institutions/schools and firms. Distribution of brochures.		Guidance by teachers and educational counsellors helping students to choose their individual study programmes and giving vocational advice. Visits to institutions/schools and firms. Distribution of brochures.
S	Visits to educational establishments and firms, training placements. Educational and vocational guidance by guidance counsellors and teachers.			
UK	No specialised guidance.	A partnership between teachers and members of local vocational guidance services provides pupils with integrated information and advice. In Scotland, there are members of school staff in charge of guidance, both career and personal.		
IS	No specialised guidance.		Guidance from class teachers and, for individuals, by educational counsellors in some schools. Visits to institutions/schools and firms, distribution of brochures.	In each institution there are educational counsellors (part-time or full-time) who provide individual guidance and give information on higher education studies and job opportunities. Teachers also provide guidance.
LI	During the procedures of transfer to post-primary education there are consultations with parents about guidance.	The curriculum of the *Oberschule* and of the *Realschule* contains the subject 'preparation for work' in the 7th and 8th years.	Initiation courses *(Schnupperwochen)* in the workplace.	Classes on entry to working life.
NO	Guidance and information about the world of work form part of the curriculum. One-week training placement during the 8th year.		Each institution has a counsellor, on either a full- or part-time basis, who provides information regarding upper secondary education and employment.	Each institution has a counsellor, on either a full- or part-time basis, who provides information and individual advice (types of study, selection of subjects, apprenticeship possibilities, job opportunities and further study). Institutions which offer both general and vocational education often have one counsellor for each type of study.

3. Pupil mobility in lower secondary education

Only six of the 18 EU and EFTA/EEA countries are concerned by the issue of pupil transfer during lower secondary education, since it is then that pupils are channelled into different types of lower secondary education (Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, Liechtenstein).

In Belgium, it is possible to move from one type of education to another but this is infrequent in the sense of transfers from vocational back to general education. Pupils in vocational education also have the possibility of obtaining the same certificates as those delivered in the other types of education, sometimes by prolonging their schooling. In the French Community of Belgium, lower secondary education has been integrated since the 1994/95 school year: all pupils have two years (possibly three) in which to acquire the core skills *(socles de compétence)* they need before moving to upper secondary education. In the Flemish Community of Belgium, there are only two types of lower secondary education: type A (for most pupils) and type B for pupils with difficulties. Transfer from type B to type A is always possible.

In Luxembourg, it is possible to transfer from one type of education to another. Particular attention is paid by the 'class council' to the subjects in which the pupil obtains the best results.

In the Netherlands, the recent introduction of the *Basisvorming* into all lower secondary education structures (VWO, HAVO, MAVO, VBO) aims to impart three years of broad-based education without making a distinction between general and technical courses.

In Austria, in contrast to the three countries mentioned above, types of education are differentiated not in line with their general or vocational nature, but in relation to the level of general education provided. Two types of school exist in lower secondary education *(Hauptschule* and *allgemeinbildende höhere Schule)*. Mobility between these two school types is facilitated by the identity of the curriculum in the first two years.

In Germany, all lower secondary schools build on undifferentiated primary education. They all provide general education so that vocational education takes place at upper secondary level only after compulsory general education. Secondary schools differ in length of course and school leaving qualifications but they are so interrelated that they constitute an open system allowing transfer from one type of course to another.

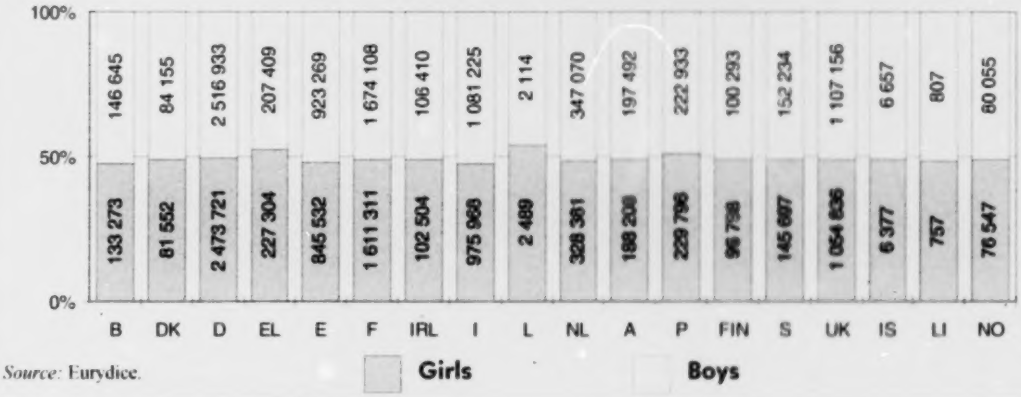
In conclusion, it is possible in these five countries for pupils to switch between types of education during this stage to enable them to retain for as long as possible their chances of re-entering the more selective type of education (mainly general education). But in practice, the different systems mainly make it possible for pupils who are no longer able to follow their current level of education to move to a less selective type of education.

4. Distribution of the school population among the various secondary education structures

There is a division not only between the lower and upper stages of secondary education but also between general education (an education of transition leading to higher education) and vocational education (a preparation mainly for employment but also for certain higher education studies).

In lower secondary general education, the proportion of girls to boys is virtually identical in all countries (see Graph 1). Three countries – Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands – present a different picture in that they offer lower secondary vocational education. Whereas there are more boys than girls in lower secondary general education in Belgium, girls are more represented in lower secondary vocational education (65% girls) in the same year. The opposite situation is found in Luxembourg and the Netherlands in lower secondary education, where it is only in vocational education that the number of boys exceeds that of girls (Luxembourg: 48% girls; Netherlands: 40% girls).

Graph 1. Percentage (and numbers) of girls and boys in lower secondary general education, 1994/95

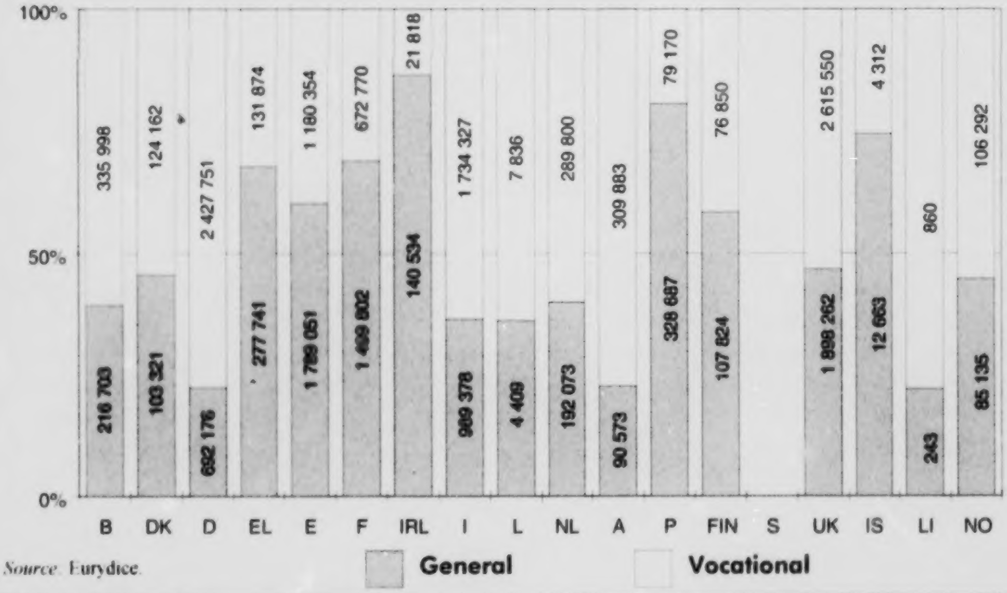


Source: Eurydice.

Belgium: Figures are for 1993/94.
Italy: Figures are for 1992/93. The total of girls and boys in 1994/95 was 1 867 230.
Portugal: Provisional figures.

In upper secondary education, where different types of education have been established in all countries (except Sweden), general education predominates in half the countries under study. Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Portugal, Finland, United Kingdom and Iceland have more pupils in general than in vocational education. The contrast is particularly marked between Germany and Austria on the one hand, where over three-quarters of all pupils follow vocational schooling, and Ireland and Portugal on the other, where fewer than a quarter of pupils follow this type of education.

Graph 2. Percentage (and numbers) of pupils in upper secondary general and vocational education, 1994/95



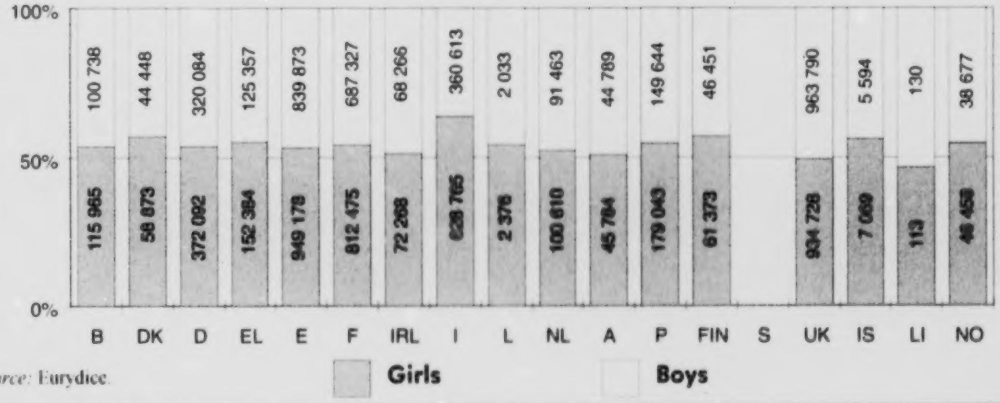
Source: Eurydice.

Belgium: Figures are for 1993/94.
Sweden: Since 1995, upper secondary education is no longer divided into general and vocational branches.
United Kingdom: For international statistical purposes, all pupils in schools are classified as following general education programmes. All students on Further Education courses, some of which are academic, are classified as following vocational courses. Students over 19 years of age attending these institutions are included in these statistics.

In all the countries under study, with the exception of the United Kingdom, girls outnumber boys in upper secondary general education. The opposite is true for vocational education, where boys are more numerous, except in Spain, Ireland and Finland.

In Spain, it would appear that boys are less likely than girls to continue at school after the end of compulsory education. Indeed, girls outnumber boys in each of the two types of education. Finally, upper secondary vocational education is most male-dominated in Iceland (74%).

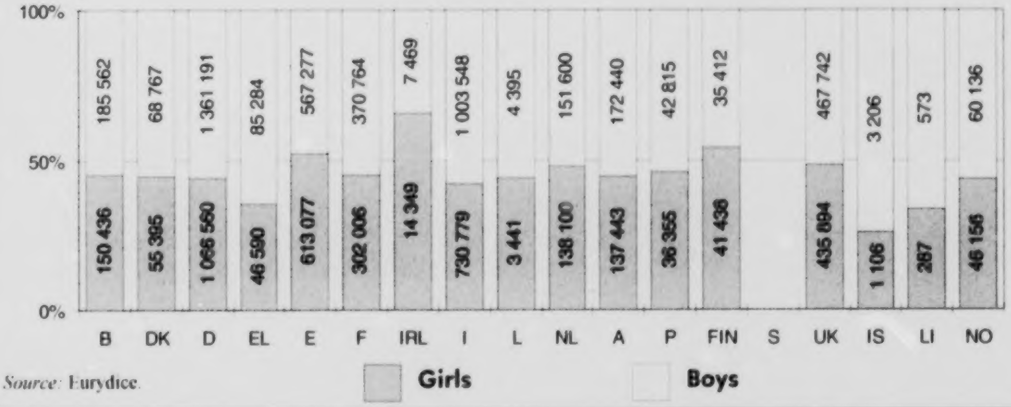
Graph 3. Percentage (and numbers) of girls and boys in upper secondary general education, 1994/95



Source: Eurydice.

Belgium: Figures are for 1993/94.
Greece: EPL pupils (comprehensive school) are classified as following general education. However, it should be noted that EPL is a new type of school especially created to combine general and technical education.
Sweden: Since 1995, upper secondary education is no longer divided into general and vocational branches.
United Kingdom: For international statistical purposes, all pupils in schools are classified as following general education programmes. All students on Further Education courses, some of which are academic, are classified as following vocational courses. Students over 19 years of age attending these institutions are also included in these statistics. Figures broken down by sex are not available for Scotland.

Graph 4. Percentage (and numbers) of girls and boys in upper secondary vocational education, 1994/95



Source: Eurydice.

Belgium: Figures are for 1993/94.
Sweden: Since 1995, upper secondary education is no longer divided into general and vocational branches.
United Kingdom: For international statistical purposes, all pupils in schools are classified as following general education programmes. All students on Further Education courses, some of which are academic, are classified as following vocational courses. Students over 19 years of age attending these institutions are also included in these statistics. Figures broken down by sex are not available for Scotland.

5. Conclusions

The objectives underpinning the organisation of secondary education are shared, in large part, across the European Union and associated countries. General education of a broadly standard type is provided for all children in the initial stage and followed by a phase of diversification which recognises different interests and aptitudes of pupils and the range of educational or occupational futures available to them. These aims are not new. They differ little from those contained in the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. The major shift in emphasis in recent years has been that diversification should not become a barrier to individual opportunities as more young people continue education to the age of 18.

In view of the agreement on aims, it is puzzling that there are so many variations in the institutional structures of secondary education. Some secondary schools admit pupils as early as the age of 10, while others make them wait until they have completed an all-through institution of compulsory education at 16 or 17. There may be separate institutions for the lower and upper stages or one school for the whole of secondary education. Some upper secondary institutions are restricted to two years (as in Denmark and Ireland), while elsewhere there are establishments covering both lower and upper secondary education in a course of eight years.

Common secondary schools are open to all young people irrespective of achievement or aspiration, even though restricted, in some cases, to those of one neighbourhood. Differentiated schools admit young people who are judged to have particular capacities or potential. The variations do not always coincide with national frontiers. While most countries only have one type of secondary school, both common and selective kinds are found in some other countries, for example, in England and Northern Ireland.

This heterogeneity in Europe is not likely to disappear very quickly. Radical reform of school structures is an expensive, lengthy and often disputed process which was made necessary in the 1960s and 1970s by the expectation of universal participation in secondary education. Only Spain and Portugal have embarked on major reforms of the whole secondary school structure since the mid-1980s. In the reforms of the 1960s, the reconciliation of tradition and the demands for change was often delicate. The outcome was differing patterns of secondary schooling between and, sometimes, within countries.

There is also little change in regard to the length of compulsory schooling and in the certificates awarded to students. The legal end of compulsory education comes as early as 14 in Italy and as late as 18, at least on a part-time basis, in Belgium and the Netherlands, reflecting differing norms of what states legitimately can require of their citizens rather than expectations of how long young people should be in education. Certificates of student attainment, with national validity, may be given to some pupils as young as 14 whereas others may not receive their first recognised qualification, as in the pre-university schools (VWO) in the Netherlands, until the age of 18. National qualifications are not easily changed. They have a symbolic value embedded in custom and history.

The accommodation of new purposes and older institutions leads to the appearance of new stages in the course of secondary education which may or may not correspond to the institutional structures and/or the points of time at which certification occurs. The division between lower and upper secondary education is real throughout the European Union because it reflects clear purposes. It may be achieved through subtle changes in the curricula of particular years rather than in dramatic breaks in institutional topography.

The aims also give special importance to conditions of access, educational guidance and the demography of schooling. Selection of pupils for different kinds of lower secondary school is more difficult to justify. Germany and the Netherlands have compensated by introducing common programmes across the various types of schools in the early years. There are also issues of differences of standards between nominally common schools in most countries. Allocation of pupils to lower secondary schools by geographical principles attempts to ensure that all young people have similar opportunities. Parental choice, which does not conflict with financial and organisational efficiency, is given increasing weight in many countries, not only to permit the individual interests of children to be matched with appropriate schools but also to allow parental decisions to stimulate particular schools to improve their performance.

The variations in the capacities and interests of pupils in upper secondary education give added importance to educational guidance. For many pupils, the end of lower secondary education coincides with the time when decisions about future careers need to be made. For, while achievement is the main criterion for allocation to different branches of secondary education, pupils need to be aware of their potential and the implications of their choices of educational route on transfer to the upper secondary stage. The general and vocational educational bifurcation is not the only challenge to pupil decision-making since opportunities are available in many countries for vocational educational courses to lead to higher education. The significant decisions instead focus on what kind of future study and work the pupil should choose.

There are two differing approaches to guidance. In most countries, the emphasis is upon teachers and counsellors, sometimes with the aid of psychological services, as in Belgium or Luxembourg, helping pupils to develop self-awareness so that they can make rational choices. The main differences are in whether guidance is provided mainly by teachers or by specialist counsellors.

The other approach stresses the provision of experience of the world of work. In Germany, an introduction to the working world, including work placements, has been compulsory for secondary school pupils for a considerable time. Other countries have more recently introduced similar approaches to help pupils to make career choices they will not later regret.

The demographic picture of secondary education adds another perspective to school structures. While lower secondary education has been almost universally attended in most countries for some years, participation rates in the upper secondary phase have increased in ways that suggest that a rigid separation of options may not meet pupil aspirations.

The proportions of the pupil population in the general and vocational streams varies considerably between countries. But there may not be as sharp a distinction between the content of courses, as indicated by the decision in Sweden to abolish the distinction between general and vocational streams. Labour market demand for those with narrowly defined secondary vocational education may decline in the future, as high technology operations require enhanced levels of general education from more workers. In effect, most or all upper secondary education may become general in character. Following this hypothesis, the choice between a general or vocational orientation to courses may be a matter of pupil interest which can be expressed in selection of programmes rather than of institutions.

6. Glossary

Algemeen secundair onderwijs	B nl	General secondary education
Allgemeinbildende höhere Schule (AHS)	A	Academic secondary school, lower and upper levels
Ammatillinen koulutus	FIN	Vocational education
Ammatillinen oppilaitos/opisto	FIN	Vocational upper secondary and post-secondary education college
Ammattikorkeakoulu	FIN	Non-university higher education (AMK-institution)
Bachillerato	E	General upper secondary education
Barnetrinnet	NO	Primary education
Basisonderwijs	NL	Primary education
Beroepssecundair onderwijs	B nl	Vocational secondary education
Beroepsvoorbereidend leerjaar	B nl	Lower secondary vocational education
Berufliches Gymnasium or **Fachgymnasium**	D	Upper level of the *Gymnasium* with a career oriented or technical bias (years 11-13)
Berufsbildende höhere Schule	A	Upper secondary technical and vocational college
Berufsbildende mittlere Schule	A	Intermediate secondary technical and vocational college
Berufsbildende Pflichtschule (Berufsschule)	A	Apprenticeship with part-time compulsory vocational school (upper secondary)
Berufsfachschule	D	Full-time upper secondary vocational school
Berufsgrundbildungsjahr	D	Basic vocational training year (1st stage of vocational training)
Berufsschule	D	Part-time upper secondary vocational school
Bildungsanstalt für Kindergartenpädagogik	A	*Kindergarten* teacher training college
Bildungsanstalt für Sozialpädagogik	A	Socio-pedagogical training college
Collège	F	Lower secondary school
Community school	IRL	Comprehensive lower and upper secondary school
Comprehensive school	IRL	Comprehensive lower and upper secondary school
Comprehensive school	UK	Comprehensive lower and upper secondary school, non-selective admissions
Cursos de carácter geral (CSPOPE)	P	Secondary courses predominantly leading to further studies
Cursos do ensino básico recorrente	P	Part-time evening foundation education courses for unqualified adults
Cursos do ensino secundario recorrente	P	Part-time evening courses (secondary general and technical education)
Cursos tecnológicos	P	Secondary courses predominantly oriented towards working life (technological courses)
Cursos das Escolas Profissionais	P	Secondary courses followed as an alternative to general and technological courses for the intermediate training of technicians
Dimotiko scholeio	EL	Primary school
Educación primaria	E	Primary education

Educación Secundaria Obligatoria (ESO)	E	Compulsory secondary education
Efterskoler	DK	Private boarding schools (lower secondary education, years 8 – 10)
Eniaio polykladiko lykeio (EPL)	EL	Comprehensive upper secondary school
Ensino Básico	P	Basic education, primary education and lower secondary education
Escuelas tecnicas superiores	E	Higher technical colleges
Escuelas universitarias	E	University schools
EU (Erhvervsuddannelserne)	DK	Vocational education and training
Fachhochschule	D	Application-oriented higher education institution providing degree courses particularly in engineering, economics, social work and design
Fachoberschule	D	Technical upper secondary school (years 11 and 12)
Facultades	E	University faculties
Fjölbrautaskóli	IS	Comprehensive upper secondary school
Folkeskole	DK	Primary and lower secondary education
Formación profesional específica de grado medio (or Ciclos formativos de grado medio)	E	Vocational upper secondary education
Framhaldsskóli	IS	Upper secondary school
Further education college	UK	A type of further education institution providing mainly vocational education courses
Further education institution	UK	A post-compulsory institution providing general and vocational courses. However, for international statistical purposes, all students on further education courses are classified as following vocational programmes.
Genikes exetaseis	EL	General examination for entry to higher education
Geniko lykeio	EL	General upper secondary school
Gesamtschule	D	Comprehensive lower secondary school with two forms – the cooperative *(kooperative Gesamtschule)* and the integrated *(intergrierte Gesamtschule)*. A number have also the upper secondary level *(gymnasiale Oberstufe)*.
Grammar school	UK (E/NI)	Lower and upper secondary school, selective entrance
Grundschule	D	Primary school
Grundskola	S	Compulsory primary and lower secondary education
Grunnkurs (GK)	NO	Upper secondary education, foundation courses
Grunnskólapróf	IS	Examination at the end of compulsory schooling
Grunnskole	NO	Compulsory primary and lower secondary education
Grunnskóli	IS	Compulsory primary and lower secondary school
Gymnasio	EL	Lower secondary school
Gymnasieskola	S	General and vocational upper secondary school
Gymnasium	D	General lower and upper secondary school, normally years 5-13, providing advanced general education and leading to university entrance qualifications
Gymnasium	DK	General upper secondary school
Gymnasium	LI	General lower and upper secondary school leading to higher education entrance qualifications

Gymnasiale Oberstufe	D	Upper level of the *Gymnasium* (normally years 11-13) preparing for final examinations and university entrance
Háskólar	IS	Universities
Hauptschule	A	General lower secondary school
Hauptschule	D	Lower secondary school (normally years 5-9) providing basic general education
HAVO (Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs)	NL	Upper general secondary education
HF (Højere Forberedelseseksamen)	DK	Course leading to the higher preparatory examination (general upper secondary education)
HHX (Højere Handelseksamen)	DK	Course leading to the higher commercial examination (vocational upper secondary education)
HTX (Højere Teknisk Eksamen)	DK	Course leading to the higher technical examination (vocational upper secondary education)
Instituto de educación secundaria	E	Lower and upper secondary school
Iðnskoli	IS	Vocational upper secondary school
Istituto d'arte	I	Upper secondary arts college
Istituto magistrale	I	Teacher training at upper secondary level
Istituto professionale	I	Vocational upper secondary college
Istituto tecnico	I	Technical college of vocational upper secondary education
IUFM	F	University teacher training college
Korkeakoulu	FIN	University
Kunstsecundair onderwijs	B nl	Secondary artistic education
KVU	DK	Higher education, short course
Lager onderwijs	B nl	Primary education
Liceo artistico	I	Upper secondary arts school
Liceo classico	I	Classical-type upper secondary school, general education
Liceo scientifico	I	Scientific-type upper secondary school, general education
LLW (Leerlingwezen)	NL	Apprenticeship system (levels 1, 2 and 3)
Lukio/gymnasium	FIN	General upper secondary school
LVU	DK	Higher education, long course
Lycée d'enseignement général et technologique	F	Establishment of general and technological upper secondary education
Lycée général	L	Lower and upper general secondary school
Lycée professionnel	F	Establishment of upper secondary vocational education
Lycée technique	L	Lower and upper technical and vocational school
Lykeio	EL	General upper secondary school
MAVO (Middelbaar Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs)	NL	Lower secondary general education
MBO (Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs)	NL	Upper secondary vocational education
Menntaskóli	IS	Upper secondary school
Middle school	UK (E/W)	School for children of 8-12 years or 9-13 years officially classed as either a primary school or a secondary school depending on the age of the majority of the pupils
MVU	DK	Higher education, medium-length course
National school	IRL	Primary school

Oberschule	LI	Lower secondary school preparing pupils for vocational training and working life
Oberstufenrealgymnasium	A	General upper secondary school
Orientierungsstufe	D	Orientation stage in lower secondary education
Peruskoulu/grundskola	FIN	Compulsory primary and lower secondary education
Polytechnischer Lehrgang	A	Pre-vocational year
Realschule	D	Lower secondary school (years 5-10) providing extended general education
Realschule	LI	Lower secondary school preparing pupils for general upper secondary education, vocational training and working life
Régime technique	L	Upper secondary technical education provided in a technical *lycée*
Scuola elementare	I	Elementary school, primary education
Scuola magistrale	I	Upper secondary training school for nursery teachers
Scuola media	I	Lower secondary school
Secondary school	IRL	Comprehensive lower and upper secondary school
Secondary school	UK	Lower and upper secondary school providing general education
Sérskólar á háskólastigi	IS	Specialised higher-level vocational schools
Sérskóli	IS	Specialised vocational school
Sixth form college	UK (E/W)	A type of further education institution providing mainly general education courses for 16-19 year olds
Stúdentspróf	IS	Examination giving entitlement to enter university
Sveinspróf	IS	Journeyman's examination
Techniki epaggelmatiki scholi (TES)	EL	Vocational upper secondary technical institution
Techniko epaggelmatiko lykeio (TEL)	EL	Vocational upper secondary technical school
Technisch secundair onderwijs	B nl	Secondary technical education
Tertiary college	UK (E/W)	A type of further education institution providing both general and vocational education
Ungdomstrinnet	NO	Lower secondary education
VBO (Voorbereidend Beroepsonderwijs)	NL	Pre-vocational education
Verslunarpróf	IS	Business studies examination
Videregående kurs I (VK I)	NO	Upper secondary education, level I advanced courses
Videregående kurs II (VK II)	NO	Upper secondary education, level II advanced courses
Videregående opplæring	NO	Upper secondary education
Vocational school	IRL	Comprehensive lower and upper secondary school
Volksschule/Grundschule	A	Primary school
Volksschuloberstufe	A	Primary school providing lower secondary education
VWO (Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs)	NL	Pre-university education
Yliopisto	FIN	University

II – Organisation of education

A better understanding of the place of secondary education in the school careers of pupils involves going beyond analysis of institutional structures and the range of branches available to pupils in secondary education. The organisation of teaching as such can be described through an axis which compares the internal working of the school in each country with the ways in which prescribed objectives are pursued. Of the parameters considered in this chapter, particular attention is given to the time allocated to the various subjects studied by pupils as well as to the methods of evaluation used to assure their mastery. Scrutiny of the time allotted to different compulsory curriculum subjects sometimes reveals considerable variations between countries in the importance given to certain subjects at the same level of education. Similarly, procedures for the assessment of pupils and the certification processes at the end of courses are also important elements which testify to the diversity of situations and the differing degrees of autonomy accorded to educational institutions.

1. Organisation of school time

1.1. Distribution and duration of school holidays[1]

The summer vacation varies in length between six weeks (Germany, England, Wales, Scotland) and thirteen weeks (Ireland, Iceland).

While Danish, Finnish, Scottish and some German pupils return to school as early as mid-August, most of their counterparts in other countries only do so in early September. In Spain, Luxembourg and Portugal and for other pupils in Germany, the secondary school year begins in the second half of September.

Young people in over half the countries covered have a break of around one week in late October or early November. Greek, Spanish, Italian, Austrian, Portuguese, Swedish and Icelandic pupils do not share this privilege.

At the end of the calendar year, over the Christmas period, all European pupils have around two weeks' holiday.

Between January and March, there is a short break which is enjoyed by all except Greek, Italian and the majority of Scottish and Icelandic pupils.

In all Member States there is an Easter break ranging from one to two weeks (except in Finland where it lasts only four days). In most countries this is the last holiday of the school year. In Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (except Scotland), the third term is punctuated by around one week's holiday.

To summarise, with the exception of Scotland, those countries with the shortest summer holidays (Germany, England, Wales) usually have a holiday period in October, at Christmas, in February, at Easter and in May. In Germany, the duration of this holiday period is set by the various *Länder* each year. By contrast, Iceland, which has 13 weeks of summer holiday, has no holiday period in October, February or May.

In addition to these official school holidays, all countries have a quota of up to 13 days which they distribute in line with national and local holidays.

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[1] For further details, please consult *Organisation of School Time in the European Union*, second edition, EURYDICE (1995).

1.2. Number of teaching days per year

The official number of teaching days per year established by the countries varies from one to the next. In Iceland, pupils in upper secondary education attend school for 160 days a year, while in Luxembourg they are there for 216 days.

However, as explained in the following paragraph, these figures are not particularly meaningful since in some cases they refer to full days and in others to half days. There may also be variations within a single Member State. This is the case in Germany, Austria and Portugal where two different schemes of the school week operate in parallel, which in turn has an impact on the number of teaching days in the year.

1.3. Planning of the typical school week

The most common pattern of the school week is five days from Monday to Friday, except in Luxembourg and Italy where six days are still the norm. In four other countries (some *Länder* in Germany, Ireland, Austria, Portugal), schools are free to choose between a five-day and a six-day week. In a few countries, the length of school time also varies from day to day. In Belgium and France, there is no school on Wednesday afternoons. In Luxembourg, three full days alternate with three mornings. However, in some schools a 'modified' five-day week exists for those pupils who devote more time to sports and musical activities.

In addition, the school day typically extends from 8 a.m. – or earlier – until 1 p.m. or 2 p.m. in Austria, Denmark and Germany, while in most other countries it does not start until 8.30 a.m. and does not finish until 4 p.m. or 5 p.m., including a lunch break.

1.4. Number and length of taught periods per week

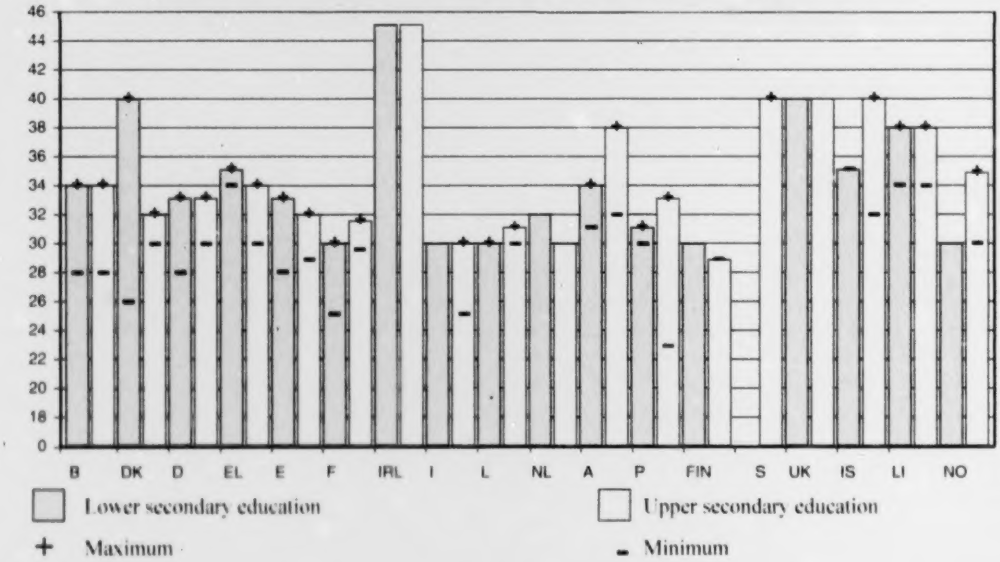
In most countries, the weekly teaching time is determined by a prescribed minimum number of taught periods.

Tables 31 and 32 show the weekly minimum and maximum number of taught periods and the length of such periods for lower as well as upper secondary education. They reveal that the weekly number is generally slightly smaller for lower secondary than for upper secondary schools. This number is the same in Belgium, Ireland and, for pupils in school, the United Kingdom (except Scotland). Only in Greece is the average number of periods greater in lower than in upper secondary education. The number may increase as pupils advance through lower secondary education, as in Denmark, Germany and Spain. This was formerly the case in Greece, but since the 1996/97 school year, the number of periods remains the same for the three years.

This divergence is partly influenced by the number of periods in upper secondary vocational education. Indeed, in those countries where, at the upper secondary stage, the average number of taught periods differs between general and vocational education, the majority have a greater number in vocational education: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, Italy, Luxembourg, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden and Iceland.

However, if the weekly number of taught periods in lower and upper secondary general education is compared (see Graph 5), the difference becomes almost negligible. In some countries there is nevertheless a higher average weekly number of teaching periods during lower secondary education: Greece, Finland and Sweden (based on the theoretical averages for the last two countries). Conversely, there are generally more periods in upper secondary in France, Luxembourg, Austria and Norway.

Graph 5. Weekly number (minimum and maximum) of taught periods in lower and upper secondary general education, 1995/96



Source: Eurydice.

The graph is based on the data contained in Tables 31 and 32. For some countries – detailed in the footnotes to those tables – the values represent theoretical averages and the graph is by way of illustration only. In some countries (e.g. Sweden and the United Kingdom), the number of taught periods and their duration is determined at school level and therefore varies from school to school.

However, to compare pupils' numbers of classes, it is important to take into account not only the number of weekly periods but also their length. This differs between countries and may indicate major variations between apparently similar weekly amounts of teaching. Thus, pupils in lower secondary general education in Ireland have 45 periods a week, each of 40 minutes (1 800 minutes a week). In contrast, Italian students have a minimum of 30 periods, but each one officially lasts 60 minutes (also 1 800 minutes a week). The lightest weekly load in lower secondary education is approximatively 1 200 minutes (Denmark and Portugal).

Table 31. Weekly number of taught periods and their duration in lower secondary education, 1995/96

Member State	Number of periods per week	Duration of a period	Number of school days in the year
B[1]	General education: minimum 28, maximum 32/33/34 Vocational education: minimum 28, maximum 36	50 minutes	182
DK	minimum 26, maximum 40[2]	45 minutes	200
D	minimum 28, maximum 34[3]	45 minutes	188/208[4]
EL	minimum 34, maximum 35[5]	45 minutes	175
E	minimum 28, maximum 33[6]	55 minutes[7]	175
F	minimum 25.5, maximum 30	55 minutes	180
IRL	45	40 minutes	179
I	30 to 40[8]	60 minutes[9]	minimum 200
L	General education: 30 Technical education: minimum 30, maximum 31	50-55 minutes	216
NL	32	50 minutes	200[10]
A	31 to 34[11]	50 minutes	180/214
P	30 or 31[12]	50 minutes	175/210
FIN	30 (average)	45 minutes[13]	190
S	maximum 40[14]	60 minutes	178 to 190[15]
UK			
E/W	approximately 40[16]	35-40 minutes	minimum 190
NI	approximately 40[17]	35-40 minutes	minimum 190
SC	35 to 40[18]	40-60 minutes	190
IS	minimum 35	40 minutes	160
LI	minimum 34, maximum 38	45 minutes	200[19]
NO	30	45 minutes	190

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[1] This level corresponds to the first cycle of two years in the three Communities (French, German-speaking and Flemish). In pre-vocational and technical education (accessible only in the second year in the French Community), the maximum number can rise to 36 and, again in the French and German-speaking Communities, two periods of support teaching (*activités complémentaires*) may also be added, which explains the maximum of 34 periods.

[2] The minimum number is for the 7th year of the *folkeskole*. The maximum is calculated on the basis of the legal requirement of 7 to 8 lessons a day in the 8th and 9th years.

[3] Generally, pupils have 28 periods (compulsory subjects and options) for the first two years (years 5 and 6) in all kinds of school and 30 periods in years 7 to 10.

[4] In the *Länder* which have introduced a five-day week, the annual number rises to 188 days on average. It is 208 days where a six-day week operates. This difference only affects the weekly timetable and not the number of hours taught in a year.

[5] The first year of the *Gymnasio* has 34 periods a week and the second year 35. From the school year 1996/97, the weekly number of periods is set at 35 throughout the *Gymnasio*.

[6] In lower secondary education (the first two years) in the Autonomous Communities which do not have their own language, the number of weekly teaching periods is fixed at 28 for the first two years and in the last two years increases to 30. Moreover, in the Autonomous Communities with their own language, the weekly number is 30.5 for the first stage of lower secondary education and 33 for the second stage. Furthermore, the weekly number may differ slightly from one Autonomous Community to the other.

[7] The official duration of a period is set at 60 minutes. However, 5 minutes are deducted from each hour to allow for changing classes.

[8] Under the extended timetable, children may attend school for up to 40 hours per week. Supplementary hours include educational activities to enrich and deepen the subjects taught.

[9] The official duration of a period is set at 60 minutes. A 20-minute deduction is made per day to allow for changing classes.

[10] With the introduction of basic secondary education (*basisvorming*), the number of days in the school year was increased by 5 in 1994.

[11] Pupils can take optional extra subjects and/or optional exercises. In addition, they may take periods of remedial teaching. Out of the total weekly number of periods in the 5th to 8th years, each school, on its own initiative, may devote periods to particular subjects or projects to be spread over the entire year.

[12] In the third stage of *ensino básico*, 2 or 3 hours per week may be allocated to sports, depending on the facilities available.

[13] The period lasts for one hour but only 45 minutes are actually spent on teaching. Municipalities are free to decide the distribution of hours to the school subjects in the last 3 years of the *Peruskoulu*. However, the law on compulsory education stipulates that the weekly timetable should have an average of 30 periods.

[14] Compulsory education in the *Grundskola* (9 years) totals 6 665 periods. No annual or weekly number of periods is fixed. Since the 1995 reform, schools decide how to distribute these periods over the 9 years of compulsory education. According to the compulsory school ordinance, school activities cannot exceed a maximum of 8 hours per day, including breaks, 5 days per week. However, not many pupils attend school 8 hours per day.

[15] The minimum and maximum number of days in the year is fixed by the law on compulsory education. Councils of each establishment are free to decide the number of days within these legal limits but this does not affect the total number of periods in the course.

[16] There are no legal requirements relating to the number of lessons or their duration. The detail of the daily timetable is a matter for the headteacher of each school. The figures given are general and vary from school to school. In England and Wales, a General Guide to Good Practice suggested minimum weekly hours of lesson time should be 24 hours for 12- to 16-year-olds. These hours only include those in which pupils are actually being taught. They exclude breaks, the daily act of collective worship, and registration. Many secondary schools provide more hours of lessons than the suggested minimum. In 1995, the average at Key Stage 3 (11- to 14-year-olds), considered here as lower secondary education, was 24.5 hours of lesson time a week.

[17] In Northern Ireland, the statutory minimum is 22.5 hours of lesson time a week (exclusive of religious instruction which is obligatory in state and grant-aided schools).

[18] Established by each local authority. School heads are free to determine the number and duration of teaching periods for their school in consultation with the teaching staff. However, the Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee (1987) agreed on the maximum 'class contact time' per week at the secondary level: 23.5 hours per week (equivalent to 4.7 hours per day).

[19] This information is valid for the *Oberschule*, the *Realschule* and the *Gymnasium*. The annual number of days is calculated on the basis of a compulsory 40 weeks and represents a maximum. The public holidays which take place during the school year are included.

Table 32. Weekly number of taught periods and their duration in upper secondary education, 1995/96

Member State	Number of periods per week	Duration of a period	Number of school days
B			
B fr and B de [1]	General education: minimum 28, maximum 32/34 Artistic/technical transition streams: minimum 28, maximum 36 Artistic/technical qualification education, Vocational education: minimum 34, maximum 36	50 minutes	182
B nl	General education: minimum 28, maximum 33 Artistic/technical and vocational education: minimum 28, maximum 36	50 minutes	182
DK	General education: minimum 30, maximum 33 Vocational education: 37[2]	45 minutes	200
D	General education: minimum 30, maximum 33[3] Artistic/technical/vocational education: minimum 30, maximum 36[4]	45 minutes	188/208
EL	General *Lykeio*: 30 *Polikladiko*, comprehensive (EPL) and technical-vocational education (TEL): 34 Technical-vocational school (TES): 30	45 minutes	175
E	General education: minimum 29, maximum around 32[5] Vocational education: variable	55 minutes[6]	175
F	General education: minimum 29, maximum 31/35[7] Vocational education: minimum 29.5, maximum 35	55 minutes	180
IRL	45	40 minutes	167/179[8]
I	Classical *Liceo*: minimum 27, maximum 29 Scientific *Liceo*: minimum 25, maximum 30 Technical school: minimum 31, maximum 38 Vocational school: minimum 31, maximum 40[9]	60 minutes[10]	minimum 200
L	General education: minimum 30[11], maximum 31 Technical education: minimum 30, maximum 34/36	50/55 minutes	216
NL	30 (average)[12]	50 minutes	200
A	General education: minimum 32, maximum 38 Vocational education: minimum 31, maximum 40[13]	50 minutes	180/214

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[1] Two periods of support teaching may be added. In the third stage of general education, the maximum number of hours per week can reach 34 when the pupil chooses certain options.

[2] In vocational education, the number of weekly periods indicated is for the first two years. During the practical apprenticeship phase, the student-apprentices have a normal week of 37 actual hours. The last phase also has 37 hours and includes practical experience and personal study periods.

[3] In the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*, the average number of periods rises to 30, of which 20 are in compulsory subjects and 10 in options which may be advanced courses.

[4] In full-time vocational education, 30 periods weekly are required as a minimum in the two years of the *Berufsfachschule*. In the *Fachoberschule*, 8 periods are compulsory in the 11th year. Practical workplace training together with 30 periods of teaching are required in the 12th year. Under the dual system (*Berufsschule* and workplace training), a weekly minimum of 12 lessons on a part-time basis in the school is required and 3 days in the company.

[5] The minimum number represents the first year of the *Bachillerato* in the Autonomous Communities which do not have their own language. The maximum represents the first year in the Autonomous Communities with their own language. The number of periods increases to 30 and 31 respectively, in the second year. However, the weekly numbers may vary slightly from one Autonomous Community to the other.

[6] The official duration of a period is set at 60 minutes. However, 5 minutes are deducted from each hour to allow for changing classes.

[7] In the last two years, the maximum may be as much as 35 in cases where the pupil chooses certain options.

[8] Secondary schools must be open for a minimum of 179 days a year of which they may devote a maximum of 12 days to certificate examinations.

[9] In view of the large number of lessons in technical and vocational schools, school councils often ask for the length of the lesson to be reduced to 55 or even 50 minutes. Such authorisation is granted by the *Provveditore agli studi* (provincial education authority) on the basis of the justification offered. More often than not, the aim is to coordinate the school timetable with public transport schedules, since schools of upper secondary education are only found in larger urban centres and cater for pupils from a considerable geographical catchment area.

[10] The official duration of a period is set at 60 minutes. A 20-minute deduction is made per day to allow for changing classes.

[11] The national minimum is in theory 29 periods per week, but pupils must add one or two 'pre-specialisation' options to this.

[12] In upper secondary education, there are no prescribed minimum or maximum numbers of teaching periods per week. There is, however, an *adviesurentabel* (a recommended teaching timetable) for the HAVO and VWO, which shows the teaching periods to be spent on each subject spread over the whole course for each school type. The theoretical average has been calculated by dividing the number of recommended periods for the whole curriculum by the number of years and weeks. In contrast, the vocational schools (MBOs) are free to organise the distribution of hours of their programmes in ways that permit their students to acquire final qualifications according to standards established at the national level.

[13] Under the dual system (*Berufsschule* and workplace training), the weekly number of periods (part-time) is 8 or 9 (confined to one day of the week).

Table 32. (cont.) Weekly number of taught periods and their duration in upper secondary education, 1995/96

Member State	Number of periods per week	Duration of a period	Number of school days
P	General education (CSPOPE)[1]: minimum 23, maximum 33 Technical education (CT)[2]: minimum 28, maximum 32	50 minutes	160/192[3]
FIN	General education: average 28.5[4] Vocational education: around 35	45-50 minutes[5]	120/190
S	General education: approximately 20 Vocational education: average 23[6]	60 minutes	178/190
UK			
E/W	approximately 40[7]	35-40 minutes	minimum 190[8]
NI	approximately 40[9]	35-40 minutes	minimum 190
SC	35-40[10]	40-60 minutes	190
IS	General education: average 35[11] Vocational education: variable, maximum 46	40 minutes	160[12]
LI	General education: minimum 34, maximum 38 Vocational education: 17	45 minutes	200
NO	from 30 to 35	45 minutes	190

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[1] In the CSPOPE (courses aimed mainly at higher education), the minimum for the 10th and 11th years is fixed at 28 periods and the maximum at 33. In the 12th year, following a regulation of 1995, technological courses have been reduced by 3 hours.

[2] In the 10th and 11th years, the minimum is fixed at 29 periods.

[3] In 1995/96, the introduction of the new system of final external evaluation has resulted in the reduction of the number of school days.

[4] In general upper secondary schools, the minimum number of courses is 75, which gives a theoretical calculated average of 28.5 periods per week based on the assumption that completion takes 500 days (3 years of 190, 190 and 120 days respectively).

[5] The period lasts one hour but this includes a break of around 15 minutes. During practical training, there are double periods (i.e. 90 minutes).

[6] Upper secondary education includes 2 150 or 2 370 periods, depending on the selected course. No annual or weekly number of periods is fixed. Schools decide how to distribute these periods over the 3 years of upper secondary education. The average presented is theoretical and is based on the assumption that the schools divide the lessons evenly throughout the period of education.

[7] Upper secondary education is taken to include the 14- to 16-year-olds. There are no legal requirements relating to the number of lessons or their duration. The detail of the daily timetable is a matter for the headteacher of each school. These figures are general and vary from school to school. In England and Wales, the suggested minimum weekly hours of lesson time is 24 hours (12- to 16-year-olds). These 'suggested' hours include only those hours in which pupils are actually being taught. They exclude breaks, the daily act of collective worship, and registration. Many secondary schools provide more hours of lessons than the suggested minimum. At Key Stage 4 (14- to 16-year-olds), the average was 24.6 hours in 1995.

At post-compulsory level (16- to 18-year-olds), pupils may continue their education in school or in further education institutions. The number of lessons a week will be determined by the courses of study undertaken by individual students. A GCE A level normally involves 240 to 300 hours of lessons ('contact time') over 2 school years. Based on a 30-week year, this equates to 4 to 5 hours a week. Pupils normally take 3 or 4 A levels. However, they may take other courses such as General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) or a combination of these courses.

[8] Does not apply to Further Education institutions.

[9] The statutory minimum for pupils of 11 to 16 years is 22.5 hours of lesson time a week during compulsory secondary education (exclusive of religious instruction which is obligatory in state and grant-aided schools).

[10] This is established by each local authority. School heads are free to determine the number and duration of teaching periods for their school in consultation with the teaching staff.

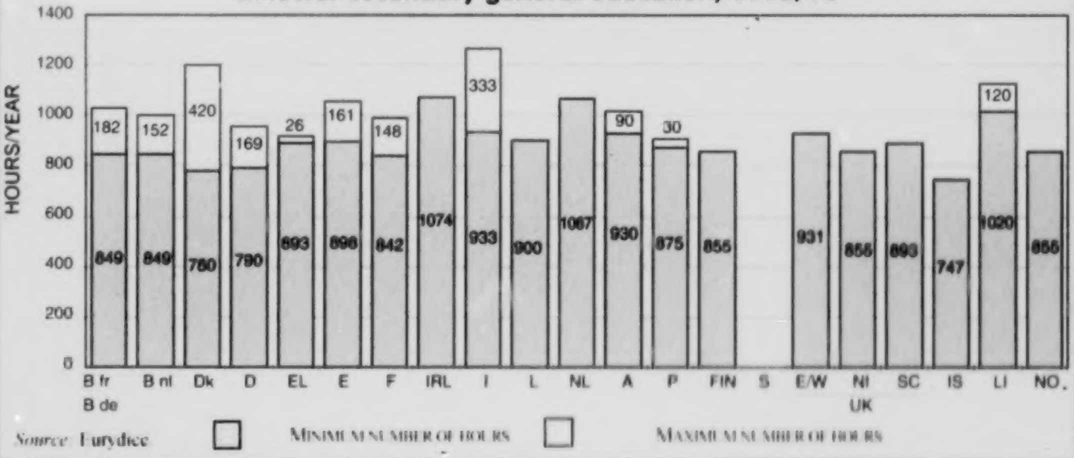
[11] On average, over the normal course of 4 years, there are 35 periods, but the number of periods may vary between 32 and 40.

[12] Consisting of days of teaching and examinations in 1995/96. The number of actual teaching days was usually 135.

1.5. Number of taught hours per year

Given the wide variations in the way school time is organised in different countries, only a calculation of the annual number of taught hours provides the basis for an accurate comparison of pupils' class attendance in each country. These annual taught hours, illustrated in Graphs 6, 7 and 8, are calculated by multiplying the number of periods per week by the duration of a period in order to obtain the weekly load in minutes. This number is then divided by the number of school days per week before being multiplied by the number of teaching days per year. The total expressed in minutes is then converted to hours by dividing by 60.

Graph 6. Annual number of taught hours in lower secondary general education, 1995/96



Source: Eurydice

Germany: The annual number of class hours in half-day schools *(Halbtagsschule)* is based on an average, which was calculated on the basis of the 'Recommendation on types of school and courses of education at lower secondary level' of the Standing Conference of the Ministers for Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of 3 December 1993.

Spain: Data are approximate. They may vary slightly from one Autonomous Community to another. The flexible timetable includes learning a mother tongue other than Castilian, for the Autonomous Communities with their own language.

Italy: The official length of a period is 60 minutes, but 20 minutes are deducted each day to take account of time spent changing classes.

Finland: This is a theoretical average based on 30 periods per week.

Sweden: The new timetable introduced in 1995/96 represents 6 665 taught hours. Schools are free to distribute these over the 9 years of the *Grundskola* (compulsory education), whilst ensuring that pupils attain certain targets at the end of the 5th and 9th years.

United Kingdom: There is no legal requirement concerning the minimum of taught lesson time in England and Wales. Governing bodies and headteachers in maintained schools however are obliged to ensure that there is sufficient time to deliver the whole curriculum. The figures for England and Wales are based on average taught lesson time per week in 1995. Time spent on registration, the daily act of collective worship and all breaks are excluded. The figure for Northern Ireland reflects the statutory minimum of 22.5 hours of taught lesson time per week. Lessons in religious education have to be added to this total. For Scotland, this is the class contact time required contractually of teachers. Time spent by pupils at school will exceed this total.

Iceland: There is no maximum. Municipalities are free to add additional hours.

Graph 6, based on the information contained in Table 31, shows the number of hours for the lower secondary level or first stage. It should be remembered that, in countries where compulsory education is organised in a single structure (Denmark, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Norway), lower secondary education is not a separate stage. For these countries, figures represent the three last years of compulsory education. It does appear in most cases that the number of hours per year varies within countries. In view of the freedom given to individual institutions to determine their own timetables, not only do the figures shown in the graph represent theoretical averages but there are also variations between schools. This is the case in Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom. In Iceland, only the minimum is imposed and municipalities may supplement it with additional hours.

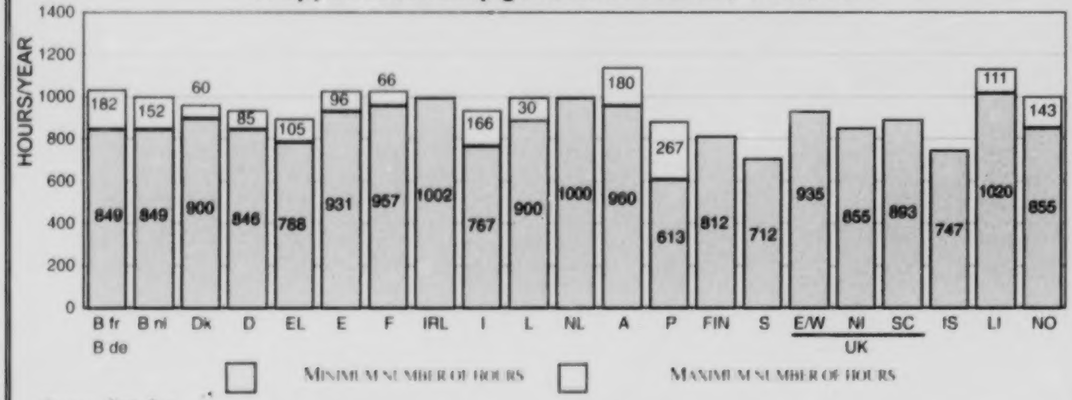
Only in Ireland, the Netherlands and in Greece (since September 1996) is the annual number of class hours the same throughout lower secondary education.

Elsewhere this variation is expressed in the form of a minimum and maximum number. In some countries, it stems from the variety of options offered to pupils (Belgium, Germany, France). In other countries, such as Denmark, Germany, Greece (until September 1996), Spain and Austria, the number of taught periods increases as pupils progress through the school. In Italy, several timetables exist in parallel and in Spain hours are added in the Autonomous Communities with their own mother tongue for learning these languages. In Luxembourg, the differences are due to the two types of education which are in parallel (general secondary education and technical secondary education).

Graph 6 indicates considerable variations between some countries. For instance, during lower secondary education in Iceland, pupils' class time amounts to a minimum of around 747 hours per year whereas in Ireland it is over 1 074 hours.

As shown in Graph 7, based on the information presented in Table 32, the number of taught hours per year in upper secondary general education does not differ greatly from that in lower secondary schools.

Graph 7. Annual number of taught hours in upper secondary general education, 1995/96



Source: Eurydice

Belgium: The upper level comprises stages 2 and 3, each lasting two years.

Germany: The annual number of class hours was calculated on the basis of the 'Agreement on the reorganisation of the *Gymnasiale Oberstufe*' of the Standing Conference of the Ministers for Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany of 7 July 1972, as amended on 11 April 1988.

Spain: Data are approximate. They may vary slightly from one Autonomous Community to another.

Ireland: Secondary schools must be open for a minimum of 179 days a year of which they may devote a maximum of 12 days to certificate examinations. The statistics presented here have been calculated on the basis of the minimum of 167 days of education.

Austria: The number of hours indicated is taken from the national fixed timetable. An increasing number of schools make use of curricular autonomy. In these schools, the number of hours may differ from the fixed timetable within a given framework.

Finland: Data refer to a theoretical average. In practice, there are considerable differences between individual pupils and between the three years of upper secondary education. The number of hours is obtained by dividing the minimum number of hours for compulsory subjects by 500 days (duration of the upper level of secondary education) and multiplying it by 190 (number of school days per year).

Sweden: The theoretical average is based on the equal distribution of 2 150 periods over three years.

United Kingdom (E/W and NI): Data are for the last two years of compulsory education (14- to 16-year-olds). For England and Wales, they are based on statistics of average taught lesson time per week in 1995. For Northern Ireland, figures are based on the prescribed minimum of 22.5 hours per week (not including religious education which must be provided in state and grant-aided schools). In post-compulsory education (16- to 18-year-olds), there is no prescribed annual number of taught hours as each pupil has an individual programme. Individual examining or awarding bodies may, however, provide guidance on the number of lessons which might be required to cover the syllabus. Attendance requirements are determined by the individual institution.

United Kingdom (Scotland): the number of hours for post-compulsory education (16- to 18-year-olds) is the same as for compulsory secondary education but pupils have the choice of a number and kinds of courses. This is the class contact time required contractually of teachers. Time spent by pupils at school will exceed this total.

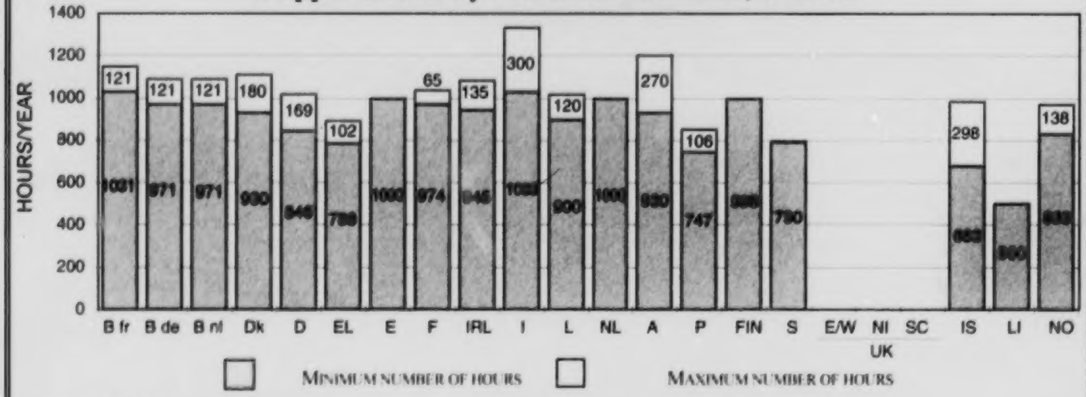
Iceland: For a normal four-year course, the average is 747 hours per year. Teaching hours in Graph 7 are calculated from the total number of 160 teaching and examination days. There were, however, normally 135 actual teaching days in 1995/96.

In upper secondary general education, there are variations in the annual number of taught hours per year in most countries. The few countries which do not show differences between maxima and minima in the graph have actual fluctuations resulting from the autonomy of schools and the freedom of choice of pupils to add extra hours of subject teaching.

At general upper secondary level, this variation is due to the wide range of options available to pupils (languages, mathematics, science, literature, etc.) and the choice between various branches of study which have an impact on how many hours of teaching they receive per week and per year.

As regards the annual number of teaching hours, the country figures vary from 613 in Portugal to 1 000 in the Netherlands. It should be noted that the upper secondary stage in Iceland lasts 4 years, which explains in part the annual minimum.

Graph 8. Annual number of taught hours in upper secondary vocational education, 1995/96



Source: Eurydice.

Denmark: The minimum is for the first two years and the maximum for the period of practical training (including short periods of education).

Germany: Situation varies according to the *Land*. These data refer to full-time vocational education in school. In the dual system of vocational education and training (part-time in-company), pupils spend in general 480 hours per year learning in the *Berufsschule*.

Spain: There is a great variety of *ciclos formativos de grado medio*. The total time of these *ciclos* varies between 1 300 and 2 000 hours, in-company training included. They can be divided over one or two years. The number of 1 000 hours is an approximate minimum for the first year. The organisation of the second year depends on the *ciclo* and the Community.

Italy: The difference in the number of hours is due to the different kinds of school chosen by the pupils.

Portugal: Data are for the technological course. In vocational schools, the annual number of hours rises to 1 200.

Luxembourg: Data are for technical secondary education which has three branches (technical, technician and vocational).

Netherlands: Institutions of vocational education (MBOs) are free to organise the distribution of hours of their programmes in ways that permit their students to acquire final qualifications according to standards established at national level.

Finland: This is a theoretical average based on 35 periods per week.

Sweden: The theoretical average is based on the equal distribution of 2 370 periods throughout training.

United Kingdom: There are no recommendations on the number of taught hours in post-compulsory education.

Iceland: The number of hours in Graph 8 is calculated from the yearly number of teaching days and examinations (160). However, the number of days of teaching in 1995/96 was generally 135.

Liechtenstein: In the dual system of vocational education and training (part-time in-company), pupils spend in general 500 hours per year learning in the *Berufsschule*.

Comparison of Graphs 7 and 8 clearly shows that in upper secondary education, the annual number of taught hours in vocational education is always equal to or higher than in general education. This difference is generally due to the fact that the weekly number of teaching periods in vocational education is higher than in general education (see Table 32).

All countries again present variations in the numbers of taught hours per year. This may be due to greater specialisation, and hence the larger numbers of options available in this type of education. Moreover, vocational education always contains a practical training course which can take various forms (work placements, work bench experience at school).

In some countries, the set timetable does not always take this practical training into account. In Spain, practical training in *ciclos formativos (módulo de formación en centros de trabajo)* occurs in on-the-job training and lasts between 400 and 700 hours according to the *ciclo*. In Italy, practical training ranges between 300 and 400 hours per year. In Luxembourg, practical training is organised in different ways depending on the type of course. One kind of vocational training is based on apprenticeship on-the-job with only a few hours of theoretical study in the *lycée technique*. Another involves two years in an educational institution followed by on-the-job training along with theoretical study in the *lycée*. In Portugal, most vocational schools have a three-year stage. Technical and practical subjects usually account for 50% of the training but there are variations between regions. Vocational secondary education includes technical and practical training sections which may take various forms (simulation, laboratory and workshop activities at school, etc.), or be in a genuine work environment.

2. Subjects taught

2.1. Minimum number of teaching hours per subject at ages 13 and 16

In several countries, curricula and official directives leave teaching staff and the school free to choose how much time should be allocated to the various subjects. This is the case in Ireland and the United Kingdom. In England and Wales, during compulsory secondary education (ages 11 to 16), the curriculum is expressed not in terms of lesson time but in terms of programmes of study and learning outcomes. The Education Reform Act 1988 specifically forbids the Secretary of State for Education to prescribe the amount of time to be spent on each subject. Instead, there is an obligation on governing bodies and headteachers to ensure that there is sufficient time in the school day to deliver the National Curriculum in England and Wales and the Northern Ireland Curriculum in Northern Ireland. The subject-matters contained in the National Curriculum are English (Welsh in some schools in Wales), mathematics, science, design and technology, information technology, history, geography, music, art, physical education and a modern foreign language. In Scotland, the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum offers guidelines on the division of time given to subjects to help headteachers in their decisions.

In Finland, the Council of State decides the minimum amount of time that has to be allocated to the compulsory subjects during the three years of lower secondary education. The municipalities and schools have free choice in the precise weekly and annual allocation of time to each subject. The situation in Sweden has been identical since 1995/96. In Austria, in lower secondary education, there are two timetables, one with fixed numbers and another autonomous timetable. Schools making use of curricular autonomy may allocate more or fewer hours to certain subjects than in the fixed curriculum. They may even introduce new subjects.

In other countries, where curricula specify the minimum distribution of taught hours for the various subjects, it is possible to compare how much time is allocated to them.

Graphs 9 and 10 show the annual **minimum** numbers of hours per subject at age 13 in general education and at age 16 in the science stream of general education. For comparisons to be made at each age, it was necessary to choose a branch and single stream found in all European Union countries. The vocational branch was not chosen because of the very great variation in programmes. The graphs presented here are given by way of illustration. They are based on the multiplication of the proportion of time allocated to the different compulsory subjects, indicated in the programmes, by the minimum number of hours of teaching per year. To simplify the graphs, certain subjects have been grouped, as in the case of foreign languages 1, 2 or 3. The humanities include history, geography, economics and social studies. Biology, physics and chemistry form ‘Sciences’. Technology, Latin, Ancient Greek, religion and moral education are classified as ‘other’.

Because of the diversity of structures and duration of educational levels, data for pupils aged 13 may correspond to different years in the school course. The specific situations are as follows:

in the German Community of Belgium – the first year of secondary education (seventh year of compulsory education)

in the French and Flemish Communities of Belgium, Greece, Spain, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Liechtenstein – the second year of secondary education

in Denmark, Portugal, Finland, Sweden and Norway – the seventh year of compulsory education in the single structure

in Germany – the eighth year of school in 12 of the *Länder*

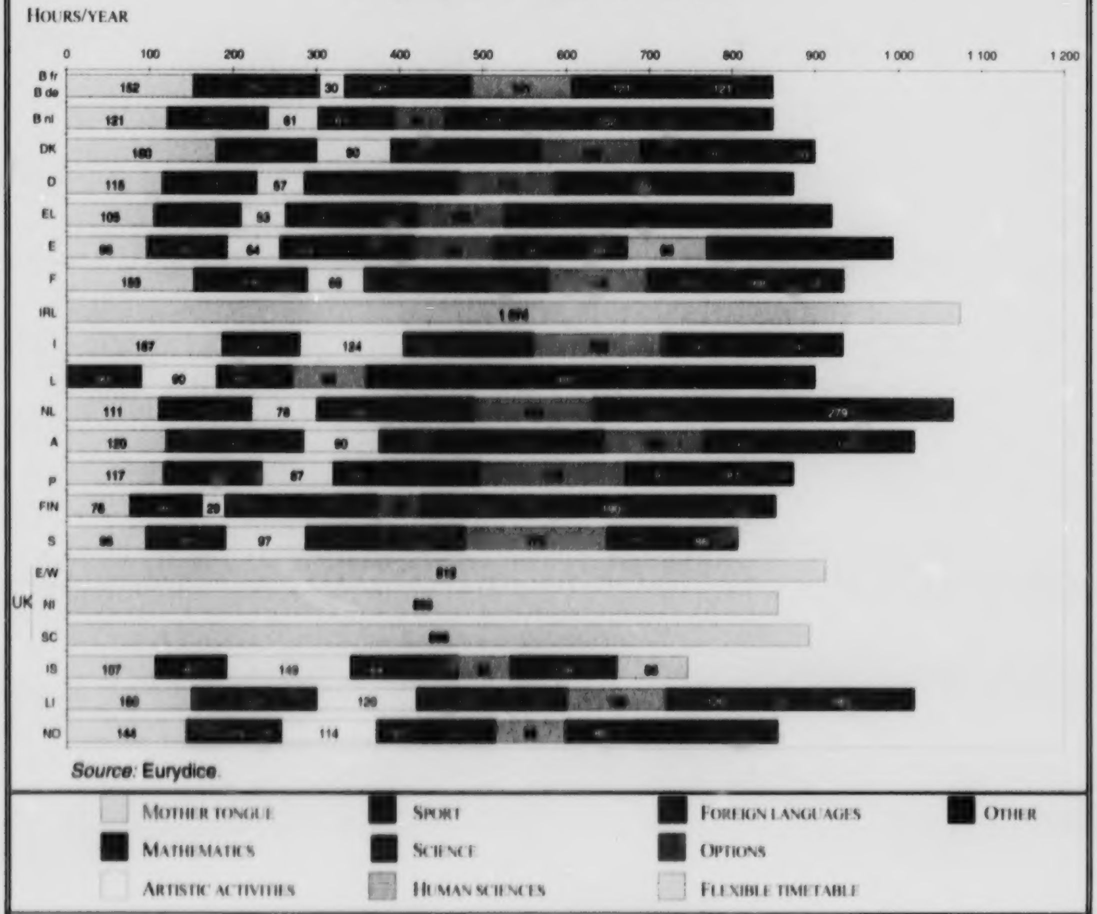
in France – third year of secondary education

in Austria – the fourth year of the *Hauptschule* (eighth year of compulsory education)

in the United Kingdom – ninth year of compulsory education

in Iceland – the eighth year of compulsory education in the single structure.

Graph 9. Annual minimum number of teaching hours in each subject at age 13 in general education, 1995/96



Source: Eurydice.

Denmark: The distribution of subject hours is fixed solely and directly by the Ministry on the basis of an estimation of 30 periods a week. However, it is the municipalities and the schools which decide the actual minimum and maximum number of weekly lessons.

Germany: The annual number of class hours by subject is based on an average, which was calculated on the basis of the weekly teaching hours for year 8 of all types of schools in the different *Länder*. The category 'other' includes religion and various subjects, according to the *Land*.

Spain: The data are approximate and can differ slightly from one Community to the other, particularly in regard to the hours of teaching in the flexible programme of Autonomous Communities with their own mother tongue.

Ireland, United Kingdom: Curricula and directives leave each school at liberty to decide how much time to allocate to the various subjects. These countries are therefore depicted as having a flexible timetable. For England and Wales, the total represents the suggested minimum number of teaching hours. For Scotland, this is the class contact time required contractually of teachers. Time spent by pupils at school will exceed this total.

Luxembourg: From the age of 13, pupils must learn three foreign languages, except in the Classics branch where Latin is taught.

Finland: There are differences between schools, therefore the figures given are only approximations. They are averages of the whole three years of lower secondary level. The number of hours was calculated on the basis of 30 hours per week.

Sweden: The majority of pupils (60%) choose a second foreign language as an optional subject. Religion is included in social sciences and not in the 'other' category. The distribution of subjects is based on pre-reform programmes. Progressively, with the implementation of the 1995 reform, the programme will have a flexible timetable.

Liechtenstein: The data presented relate to the hours in the *Gymnasium*'s academic first stage.

At the age of 13, all pupils in general education are taught the same compulsory subjects. However, the time allocated to each of these subjects varies from one country to the next. At this level of education, the teaching of the mother tongue, mathematics and a foreign language have the most important relative positions in most countries. The minimum compulsory amount of time devoted to sport in the school timetable at this educational level seems to vary less between countries.

Italy has the highest allocation of hours to teaching the mother tongue (187 hours per year). Conversely, in principle, this subject does not appear on the timetable in Luxembourg for the second year, and only 36 hours in the first year. This is explained by the mainly oral nature of Letzeburgesch – grammatical rules are relatively recent and there is little literature in the language. This also explains why Luxembourg also has the highest number of hours for foreign language teaching. German and French, the official languages of Luxembourg, are used for teaching other subjects, and the pupils also learn English.

In science subjects, the place of scientific training (biology, physics, chemistry) differs between countries. Pupils in Luxembourg receive only 30 hours' teaching a year while those in Austria have 180. Four other countries – Denmark, France, Portugal and Sweden – devote a minimum of 120 hours a year to the sciences.

Education in the humanities (history, geography, economics, philosophy, social studies) also shows great variations, with an annual minimum of 64 hours per year in Iceland and a maximum of 175 hours a year in Portugal and Sweden. There are more than 150 hours in Italy.

Pupils everywhere still participate in artistic activities but in some cases to a very limited extent, as in Belgium and Finland, where 30 hours a year are provided. In contrast, five other countries (Italy, Sweden, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) allocate 100 hours or more a year to these.

The category 'other' is very strongly represented in Greece (263 hours) where it occupies more than 25% of the minimum timetable and in Spain, with 200 hours. It is also given more than 100 hours in Italy, Austria, Liechtenstein and Norway. In Greece, the teaching of Ancient Greek in traditional humanities education is the basis for its considerable part in the timetable. The same applies in Liechtenstein, with Latin being taught in the *Gymnasium*. Everywhere else, this category is characterised mainly by the hours given to the teaching of religion, philosophy or civic education. In contrast, in the countries mentioned above, besides the teaching of religion or moral philosophy, it is the presence of technology, home economics and/or computer studies in the compulsory curriculum which largely explains the extent of this category.

At the age of 13, Belgian, Spanish, French, Dutch, Portuguese, Finnish and Swedish pupils have a variable number of options within the compulsory minimum hours allotted. In the French and German Communities of Belgium, the Netherlands and Finland, the greatest number of hours for optional subjects is offered in the minimum compulsory curriculum. In the Netherlands, it represents more than a quarter of the time.

Greater disparities are found in the organisation of school timetables at age 16 in general science-based education. Indeed, at this specific stage of their school careers, not all pupils are necessarily taught the same compulsory subjects.

It is also important to recall, in the light of the diversity of the length of the educational stages at primary and secondary level, that the age of 16 does not correspond to the same year of the scientific branch of upper secondary general education in the different countries.

The different situations are summarised below:

in Denmark, Germany, Spain, Luxembourg, Finland, Sweden, United Kingdom (Scotland), Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway – first year of upper secondary education;

in Belgium, Greece, France, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom (England and Wales and Northern Ireland – last year of compulsory education) – second year of upper secondary education;

in Austria (*Realgymnasium)* – seventh year of secondary education.

In this section of upper secondary general education, the teaching of the mother tongue, mathematics and foreign languages usually continues to be fairly important in relative terms in most countries. However, where the programme has not become flexible in regard to the individual choices of pupils, the place of science (biology, physics, chemistry) has become more important than at the age of 13 and this is one of the most important subjects almost everywhere, perhaps even supplanting the minimum compulsory time allocated to mathematics. This explains why the scientific branch has been chosen for the comparative analysis shown here.

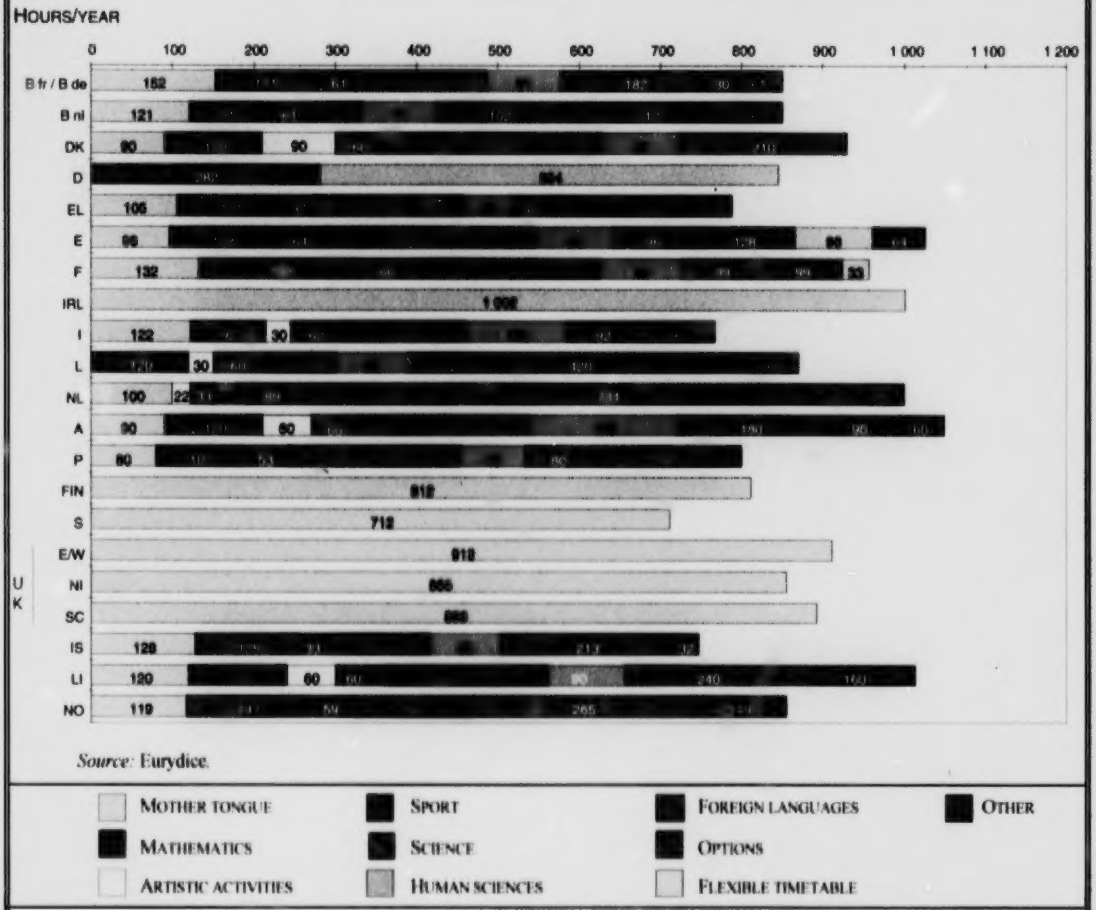
In the six countries where artistic and sports activities are still on the minimum compulsory curriculum, less time is allocated to these activities in upper than in lower secondary education, except in Denmark.

The amount of time devoted to foreign language teaching is generally not greater at the age of 16 than at the age of 13, except in the French Community of Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and Sweden. In Greece, the increased importance given to foreign languages in the first stage *(Gymnasio)* is due to the introduction of a second foreign language at that level (introduced generally since 1996). This has been progressively extended to include the first year of the *Lykeio* from 1996/97.

It should be emphasised that the human sciences usually have less importance than at the lower level. In contrast, the possibilities of options are greater.

Finally, in Italy, at this level of course in the scientific section, the teaching of Latin has become compulsory (included in the 'other' category) and in Greece, the teaching of Ancient Greek is also still compulsory.

Graph 10. Annual minimum number of teaching hours in each compulsory subject at the age of 16 in general education, science section, 1995/96



Source: Eurydice.

Belgium (B fr): The number of hours in mathematics, sciences, foreign language, human sciences and 'other' are the minima which pupils complete according to their options. The options can reach four times the minimum.

Germany: In the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*, i.e. upper level of *Gymnasium*, subjects are taught in basic and advanced courses *(Grundkurse* and *Leistungskurse)* according to pupils' aptitudes and performances. The course system includes compulsory subjects and obligatory optional subjects. Compulsory subjects (564 hours per year) are grouped together into three main areas: languages/literature/arts; social sciences; mathematics/natural sciences/technology, as well as religion and sport. Optional subjects (282 hours per year) are designed for individual specialisation in each of the three areas.

Spain: The data are approximate and can differ slightly from one Community to the other, particularly in regard to the hours of teaching in the flexible programmes of Autonomous Communities with their own mother tongue.

Ireland: Each school is free to distribute time between the subjects. This is why the flexible timetable is shown here.

Netherlands: During the six-year VWO course and the five-year HAVO course, there is a recommended number of teaching periods for each subject, which are spread over the years of the course. Schools are free to choose how to distribute the subjects over each of the years. In the VWO section, pupils sit the final examination in a minimum of 7 subjects, of which 2 are compulsory. Pupils in the HAVO section sit examinations in a minimum of 6 subjects, of which 2 are compulsory.

Portugal: The 'other' category covers the 32 hours given to the social or religious education course and the 192 hours allocated to technological studies chosen according to the possibilities offered by the school.

Finland: The annual number of teaching hours is calculated by dividing the minimum number of hours of compulsory subjects by 500 (duration of upper secondary education), then multiplying this by 190 (number of school days in the year). The result is an approximate minimum.

Sweden: In post-compulsory education, pupils choose subjects according to their abilities and are grouped in relation to their choices. The situation, then, is very complex in view of the high degree of variation in personal choices.

United Kingdom: Each school is free to allocate time to the different subjects. This is why a flexible time table is shown. This represents the suggested minimum number of hours of teaching as set out in the curriculum proposals. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, taught hours apply only to compulsory upper secondary education (age 14 to 16). In post-compulsory secondary education, pupils choose their courses based on the subjects they will take for examinations.

Iceland: The first year of upper secondary general education in most respects is common to all programmes, but some differences are observable between subjects and hours given to them. This graph presents an example representing the first year of the scientific section.

Liechtenstein: Two sections exist in the *Gymnasium* – either Latin (type B) or economics-based (type E). The latter is shown here.

Norway: There is no education for 16-year-old pupils which may be termed 'scientific'. All pupils in general education take the same subjects.

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3. Assessment and certification

What types of assessment are normally used during the course of education? Do pupils move up to the next class automatically, or is this progression subject to a decision by a 'teachers' council' or by parents after the 'class council' has given its opinion? What are the various forms and procedures of certification upon completion of the various levels?

Tables 33, 34 and 35 indicate the answers to these questions provided by each of the 18 countries, giving a breakdown between lower secondary education, upper secondary general education and upper secondary vocational education.

In **lower secondary education,** assessment is continuous throughout the year in all countries. On entry to the *collège* in France, there is a national testing programme to identify pupils' weaknesses and to provide appropriate support. In 1996, Belgium (French Community) adopted the same procedure but there the testing will take place every three years.

During lower secondary education, the decision whether to allow a pupil to move up to the next class is taken according to the pupil's performance by the 'teachers' council' in Belgium, Germany, Greece, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Austria and Portugal. In some countries, the decision also takes account of the pupil's own potential (Spain) or the objectives set for him at the beginning of the year (Italy). Promotion is automatic in Denmark, Ireland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Iceland and Norway. It is also automatic in the French and German-speaking Communities of Belgium, but only during the first stage (from the first to the second year).

By contrast, in the majority of countries, promotion from lower to upper secondary education is not automatic. Two countries have no certification at the end of lower secondary education. In the Netherlands for pre-university education (VWO) and general upper secondary education (HAVO), the programme continues without a break into upper secondary education; pupils who have completed the period of basic education receive a certificate on leaving secondary school. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, lower secondary education and the first two years of upper secondary education take place in the same institution and transition is automatic, even if the age of 14 marks the end of a key stage with assessment; a certificate (GCSE) is however awarded at the age of 16, but this is not a condition of pupils' continuing to the end of secondary education. All other Member States have introduced certification at the end of lower secondary education. This certification governs admission to upper secondary education except in Belgium, France and Scotland. In Belgium, the certificate of lower secondary education is issued after three years, i.e. at the end of the first year of the second stage.

The certificate is generally awarded as a result of a period of examinations. These examinations may be organised externally – France, Ireland, the Netherlands (for the VBO and MAVO), the United Kingdom (except for Scotland which has a mixed internal-external approach), Iceland and Norway – or internally – Belgium, Greece and Italy. Germany, Spain, Luxembourg, the Netherlands (VWO, HAVO), Austria, Portugal, Finland and Sweden do not hold any specific examination at the end of lower secondary education. In Denmark, there is a standardised examination, but this is optional.

In **upper secondary general** or **vocational education**, assessment during the school year is also continuous in most Member States. In France, all pupils entering the *lycée* are subject to national assessment in French, mathematics and a modern language, in order to detect any weaknesses and allow teachers to adapt their teaching accordingly.

Promotion to a higher class within upper secondary general or vocational education is automatic in Ireland, in Sweden and in the United Kingdom. However, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland entry to some courses in post-compulsory education at age 16 depends on specific entry criteria. Pupils' results are taken into account in Spain, France, the Netherlands, Austria and Portugal where the teachers' council decides whether or not they may move up a class on the basis of their marks. In Belgium and Italy, the decision made by the 'class council' is based not only on a pupil's marks in all subjects but also on the observations of teachers. In Greece, promotion to the next class is based on the results during the year and an examination at the end of the year. In Finland, general secondary education is organised in modular courses and pupils must succeed in a minimum of 75 courses in the whole stage. In Iceland, pupils are promoted to the higher class on the basis of assessment.

In most countries, the **certificate of upper secondary general education** is issued following a standardised external examination or an examination with external supervision.[1] This is not the case in Iceland, where pupils obtain their certificate after an internal examination. In the Netherlands, besides the external examinations, there are also internal examinations prepared and marked by the school. The final assessment represents the average mark of the internal and external examinations. In Belgium and in Greece, the certificate is awarded on the basis of not only the results of an examination at the end of the school year but also the average marks received each term. In Spain and in Sweden, there is no final examination and the certificate is awarded taking into account the results obtained during continuous assessment.

The certification procedures in **upper secondary vocational education** are somewhat different. In several countries, external examiners (employers and trade unions, Chambers of Industry and Commerce, etc.) are included in the examining board which issues the qualification certificate (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Austria, Portugal and Iceland).

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[1] A wide ranging review of qualifications for 16- to 19-year-olds in England, Wales and Northern Ireland has recently been completed. The recommendations, which are currently under consideration, include the establishment of a new framework for existing general and vocational qualifications; the introduction of a national certificate and a national diploma; the improvement of key skills at all levels and the rationalisation of the number of bodies awarding qualifications. (DEARING, R. (1996) *Review of Qualifications for 16- to 19-year-olds*. London: School Curriculum and Assessment Authority). Scotland is also in a transition phase with regard to the certification of upper secondary general education.

Table 33. Assessment and certification in lower secondary education, 1995/1996

	Assessment during education	**Promotion to the next class**	**Certification procedures**
B B fr and B de	Continuous formative assessment. Monitoring scheme introduced in 1996 to be carried out every 3 years with tests in French and mathematics on entry to secondary education at age 12.	Since the 1994/95 school year, automatic promotion from the first to the second year. Decision by the 'class council' on the basis of academic results for promotion from the first stage to the second stage and for promotion to each subsequent class.	Possibility of obtaining the certificate of basic education after one or two years for pupils in the first year B. No certification at the end of the first two years.
B nl	Continuous formative assessment.	No automatic promotion, except from first year B to the pre-vocational training year.	A certificate of basic education may be awarded after one or two years to pupils in first year B, first year A or the pre-vocational training year. A certificate of lower secondary education may be awarded at the end of the first stage: – results of the year's schoolwork and examination results are taken into account; – possibility of taking an examination marked by a central examining board.
DK	Continuous assessment.	Automatic promotion.	No compulsory examination. Possibility of sitting examinations (tests standardised at central level) in certain subjects chosen by the pupil:[1] – certificate mentioning the subjects studied, marks for the year's schoolwork and the results obtained in the examinations.
D	Continuous assessment through written and oral tests with a six-level marking scale. The marks range from 6 *(ungenügend)*, given where results do not meet the required standard and indicate that pupils do not have the basic knowledge and are not able to remedy their shortcomings in the foreseeable future, to 1 *(sehr gut)*, given, when the results far exceed the required standard.	Decision by the teachers' council *(Klassenkonferenz)*. Pass allowed if the pupil has a score of 4 in appropriate subjects. A low mark in one subject can be compensated by a high one in another. In some schools at some levels, a transfer examination can be set at the start of the school year.	Continuous assessment (written and oral tests), authorisation to move up to the second cycle: – *Hauptschulabschluß*; – *Realschulabschluß/Mittlerer Schulabschluß*; – entrance to the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*.
EL	Continuous assessment through written and oral tests.	Decision by the teachers' council on the basis of term marks in each subject.	No examination; the marks obtained in term tests and in the official end of year examinations are taken into account (weighted average of 10/20 in all subjects): – *Apolytirio Gymnasiou* certificate.
E	Continuous assessment without standardised tests.	Pupils' academic results and progress are taken into account in relation to their own personal potential.	No examination. Original objectives must be achieved: – certificate of secondary education + report (subjects taken and marks obtained).
F	National tests in reading, writing and arithmetic for pupils aged 11, in order to detect and remedy any academic weaknesses. Continuous assessment.	Decision by the 'class council' of teachers based on academic results.	The results in the final two years of lower secondary school are taken into account plus a national examination: – *Brevet national*.
IRL	Continuous formative assessment	Au[illegible]tic promotion.	National examination with two grades of difficulty (written tests and practical projects): – Junior Certificate.
I	Continuous assessment based on a personal record sheet (written description of a pupil's attitude, tendencies, behaviour and attainment level).	Overall opinion of the 'class council' of teachers in relation to the original objectives set for each pupil (taking into account the personal record sheet).	End of course examination administered by teachers and an external chairman. Written tests in Italian, mathematics and a foreign language as well as interdisciplinary oral tests: – *diploma di licenza media*. Pupils who have passed the compulsory education age of 14, but have been unable to obtain this qualification and have attended school for at least eight years, may request a certificate of completion of compulsory education.
L	Continuous assessment.	Decision by the 'class council' of teachers of the class on the basis of the year's schoolwork.	No examination: – certificate of completion of compulsory education.

[1] Two examination levels are available: the school-leaving examination (after the 9th or 10th year of education) which may cover ten subjects, and the 'advanced level' examination (only at the end of the 10th year) which covers only six subjects. Only pupils who have followed the advanced course during the 10th year are allowed to sit the advanced examination.

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Table 33. (cont.) Assessment and certification in lower secondary education, 1995/1996

	Assessment during education	Promotion to the next class	Certification procedures
NL	Continuous assessment with no standardised tests. Autonomy for schools permits them to operate their own assessment system. National attainment targets have been set for the subjects in the period of *basisvorming* (first 3 years of VBO, MAVO, HAVO and VWO). These are compulsory minimum standards which schools are expected to achieve by the end of the period of *basisvorming*.	Decision by the teachers' council on the basis of academic results.	No certification for pre-university (VWO) and general upper secondary education (HAVO). Curriculum respectively lasts six or five years without transition to the upper secondary level. Internal examination prepared and marked by the school plus a national written examination for MAVO and for the general subjects in VBO. The final assessment represents the average mark of these two examinations and leads to the MAVO and VBO completion certificates.
A	Continuous assessment.	Decision by the 'teachers' council' based upon schoolwork results, with right of appeal.	Success in the fourth year: – final report, authorisation to attend upper secondary school.
P	Continuous assessment.	Promotion is not automatic. Decision by the 'class council' on the basis of academic results, including an overall written test in each subject during the final year.	Success in the third year of the third stage: – diploma or certificate of attendance for pupils over compulsory school age.
FIN	Continuous assessment. Written tests and observation of pupils' progress and behaviour.	A pupil who has obtained satisfactory marks or a positive oral assessment in all subjects moves up to the next year. The decision is taken by the school head in agreement with the teachers. A pupil who has obtained a poor mark in one subject is given conditional permission to move up to the higher class. Promotion is confirmed after the pupil has passed a further examination in the subject concerned.	After completion of the 9th year of compulsory school, pupils receive a leaving certificate *(peruskoulun päästötodistus)*. There is no final examination.
S	Continuous assessment.	Automatic promotion.	A standardised test is prepared at central level for certain subjects (Swedish, English and mathematics). The main purpose of the tests is to ensure national comparability of the marks obtained and to facilitate pupil support. The final certificate given to pupils at the end of compulsory education includes all their results at the end of the 9th year.
UK E/W NI	Continuous formative assessment. National Curriculum assessment at age 14.	Barring exceptional circumstances, pupils normally move up from one class to the next.	No certification at age 14.
SC	Continuous assessment.	Automatic promotion.	At the end of lower secondary education, at age 16, national examination, with internal assessment in addition to external certification: – Scottish Certificate of Education Standard Grade, National Certificate (SCOTVEC).
IS	Continuous assessment.	Automatic promotion.	At the end of lower secondary education, pupils receive a school-leaving certificate specifying, *inter alia*, their results in four national examinations (Icelandic, mathematics, Danish and English).
LI	Formative and summative assessment during the school year. Grades range from 6 to 1. Two reports per school year.	In order to move up a year, passes are required in German, mathematics, and natural sciences or a foreign language.	End-of-study examination in the *Oberschule* and *Realschule*.
NO	Continuous assessment.	Automatic promotion.	Final written examination in the 9th year (in at least one subject) set by the authorities. Most pupils also take an oral examination (with participation being decided at central level): – certificate indicating the subjects chosen, the most recent marks and the examination results.

Table 34. Assessment and certification in upper secondary general education, 1995/1996

	Assessment during education	**Promotion to the next class**	**Certification procedures**
B B fr and B de	Continuous assessment	Decision by the 'class council' on the basis of academic results (class work, assessment and examinations)	Examinations possible in all subjects (written and oral tests) Possibility of taking an examination before the Community's examining board – ***certificat d'enseignement secondaire supérieur.***
B nl	Continuous assessment	Decision by the 'class council' on the basis of academic results (the pupil's attitude, year's schoolwork and results at previous examinations are all taken into account)	A certificate may be issued upon completion of the second stage (certificate of lower secondary education) A certificate of upper secondary education may be delivered upon completion of the third stage – examinations in all subjects (written and oral tests), results of the year's schoolwork are taken into account, – possibility of sitting an examination marked by a central examining board
DK	*Gymnasium* Regular internal assessment to measure pupils' progress	Opinion of all teachers on the basis of the annual marks allocated to each subject on a 13-point scale The decision is taken by pupils or their parents	Final examinations (written and oral tests) Written tests are prepared by the education department for upper secondary education and marks are awarded by two external examiners appointed by the ministry Marks for oral tests are allocated by the teacher concerned and an external examiner appointed by the ministry – ***Studentereksamen.***
	HHX, HTX Regular internal evaluation to measure pupils' progress	Opinion of all teachers on the basis of annual marks awarded in each subject on a 13-level scale	For HHX and HTX : final examinations (written and oral) in the presence of external examiners plus dissertation Certificate mentions subjects studied and examination results, as well as annual grades – ***Højere handelseksamen and Højere teknisk eksamen.***
	HF No regular evaluation	No annual results	Final examinations (written and oral in all subjects) – ***Højere forberedelseseksamen.***
D	*Gymnasiale Oberstufe* Continuous assessment on a scale of 0 to 15 points which correlates with the usual marking scale of 6 to 1 (see Table 33)	Decision by the teachers' council ***(Klassenkonferenz)*** Promotion allowed if the pupil has obtained a score of 4 in subjects taken into account for promotion (year 11) A weak mark in one subject can be compensated by a good mark in another Automatic promotion from year 12 to 13 (last year)	Continuous assessment (taking into account the results obtained during education) plus an examination before an examining board in three subjects (written and oral tests) and one oral examination in a fourth subject – ***Abiturprüfung***
EL	Continuous assessment through written and oral tests	Decision by the teachers' council on the basis of official written examinations held in June and of marks obtained each term in each subject	The final assessment represents the average of the marks obtained in the end-of-year examinations and each term's marks – ***Apolytirio lykeiou*** (end of upper secondary education certificate at the general and comprehensive ***lykeio*** (EPL) after three years), – ***Ptychio eidikotitas*** (specialised certificate at the end of four years' study)
E	Continuous assessment with no standardised tests	A pupil's academic results and progress are taken into account in relation to his own personal potential	Positive assessment in all subjects – school-leaving certificate at the end of the upper secondary cycle ***(Bachillerato).***
F	National assessment tests in French/modern language/mathematics at the age of 15 in order to detect and remedy any difficulties Continuous assessment by teachers using marks and comments	Decision by the teachers' council on the basis of academic results	National examination – certificate of secondary education conferring right of access to higher education ***(Baccalauréat)***
IRL	Continuous formative tests	Automatic promotion	National examination with two grades of difficulty, three in mathematics and Irish (tests drawn up by Ministry of Education inspectors and marked by teachers supervised by advisory examiners reporting to the inspectorate) – Leaving certificate
I	Non-standardised written and oral tests plus observation of pupil's progress and behaviour at school	Decision by the teachers' council during *scrutini* on the basis of academic results (at least 6/10 in each subject) and teachers' observation of the pupil's behaviour at school (at least 8/10)	National examination (***esame di maturità***: written and oral tests) possible for pupils who gain a positive assessment in their final year Presence of six external teachers and one from the school – ***Diploma di maturità***

Table 34. (cont.) Assessment and certification in upper secondary general education, 1995/1996

	Assessment during education	Promotion to the next class	Certification procedures
L	Continuous assessment	Decision by the 'class council' on the basis of the year's schoolwork	National written and oral examination on the final year's subjects. Pupil assessment based mainly on results of tests. However, new regulations stipulate that the result of the year's schoolwork should count for one third of the final examination mark: – *Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires*
NL	Continuous assessment with no standardised tests	Decision by the teachers' council on the basis of academic results	Internal examination prepared and marked by the school Written national examination The final assessment represents the average mark of these two examinations – certificate of completion of VWO and HAVO
A	Continuous assessment	Decision by the teachers' council on the basis of the academic results with a right of appeal	Upper cycle of the *Allgemeinbildende höhere Schule*: school-leaving examination (*Reifeprüfung, Matura*) – school-leaving certificate (*Reifeprüfungszeugnis*) giving access to university
P	Continuous assessment. Term assessments (over 10/20 at the end of the third term)	From the 10th to the 11th year: decision by the 'class council' on the basis of the results of an assessment carried out during the third term and the mark obtained in an overall written test taken during this term (over 10/20)	At the end of the 12th year, pupils sit national examinations. The final score is a weighted average of the marks obtained during the previous years and the final examination score (over 10/20) CSPOPE – certificate of secondary education CT – certificate of secondary education + vocational certificate (level III)
FIN	Continuous assessment. Written tests and observation of pupil's progress and behaviour	There are no year classes; pupils have to pass minimum of 75 compulsory courses. Each course consists of 38 lessons. At the end of a course, the teacher evaluates the pupil's proficiency in the subject. Pupils normally take three years to complete all the necessary courses. They can also study for four years	Continuous assessment and a national examination in the final year (*Ylioppilastutkinto*) The national examination contains four compulsory subjects. Pupils receive two certificates – national certificate; – certificate of upper secondary education, awarded by the school
S	Continuous assessment with grading on a scale of four	Automatic promotion	No general examination. Teachers are advised (but not obliged) to use the tests prepared by the National Education Agency in order to ensure consistency in the marks awarded The final certificate is a combination of course marks in the subjects chosen by the pupil
UK E/W NI SC	Continuous formative assessment Continuous assessment: moderation	Barring exceptional circumstances, pupils automatically move up to the next class Automatic promotion	External single-subject examinations: – General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), usually at age 16, – General Certificate of Education (GCE) A level and AS level, usually at age 18 National examinations established by the Scottish Examination Board and certification via SCOTVEC – Scottish Certificate of Education Higher Grade, Certificate of Sixth Year Studies, – National Certificate Modules
IS	Continuous assessment and written tests at the end of each semester	Depending on the academic results obtained	Internal examinations (written and oral) drawn up and marked by the school, taking into account continuous assessment – *Stúdentsprófsskírteini*
LI	Formative and summative assessment during the school year. Grades range from 6 to 1. Two reports per school year	Promotion if grade obtained in the eight required subjects averages 4 with a maximum of 4 subjects falling below this mark	Written and oral final examinations taking into consideration marks during school work – *Matura*
NO	For all levels, marks are allocated each term on a scale from 0 to 6 – no decimal points are used	Admission to level I advanced courses requires prior completion of the basic course or proof of the required skills and knowledge. Similar procedures apply for admission to level II advanced courses	Written or oral examinations, or a combination of the two. The examinations in Norwegian composition are compulsory. In addition, pupils normally sit at least two written examinations – certificate stating the end-of-year results and examination results (*Vitnemål fra den videregående skole*)

Table 35. Assessment and certification in upper secondary vocational education, 1995/1996

	Assessment during education	**Promotion to the next class**	**Certification procedures**
B B fr and B de	Continuous assessment.	Decision by the 'class council' on the basis of academic results (class work, assessment and examinations) and vocational experience.	Examination in all subjects (written and oral tests). Possibility of sitting an examination before the Community's examining board: – *certificat d'enseignement secondaire supérieur* and/or *certificat de qualification* after seven years.
B nl	Continuous assessment.	Decision by the 'class council' on the basis of academic results (the pupil's attitude, schoolwork results for the year and previous examination results taken into account).	Various certificates are awarded depending on whether the certificate of the lower stage has been obtained: – examination in all subjects with the year's schoolwork taken into account; – possibility of taking examination marked by a central examining board.
DK	Regular internal assessment of pupil progress.	Automatic promotion but pupils must pass the examinations held during the courses.	Certificate following examination on the theoretical part and training certificate on completion of the practical part of the course.
D	Vocational training at the full-time vocational schools: *Berufsfachschule, Berufliches Gymnasium/Fachgymnasium, Fachoberschule* and in the dual system: *Berufsschule* and on-the-job training. Continuous assessment, marks from 6 to 1.	Decision taken by the teachers' council (*Klassenkonferenz*): promotion granted if the pupil obtains 4 points in each of the appropriate subjects. A weak mark in one subject can be compensated by a high mark in another.	*Berufsfachschule*: written, oral and practical examinations in all subjects (general and specialised vocational areas) before examination board: – *Staatlich geprüfter technischer Assistent;* – *Staatlich geprüfter kaufmännischer Assistent.* *Fachoberschule*: written and oral examination in four subjects and in one subject oral only, before an examination board: – *Fachhochschulreife.* Certification in the dual system: Written and oral examination controlled by competent authorities (e.g. Chambers of Commerce or Industry), employers, employees and at least one teacher are involved. Intermediate certificate required for admission to final examination. – Certificate according to qualification chosen: – *Facharbeiterbrief;* – *Kaufmannsgehilfenbrief;* – *Gesellenbrief.*
EL	Continuous assessment with written and oral tests.	Decision by the teachers' council on the basis of official written examinations in each subject in June and of each term's marks.	The final assessment represents the average of the marks obtained in the end-of-year examinations and each term's marks: – TEL *Apolytiro lykeiou* (end of upper secondary education certificate) for pupils who have followed an option stream; *Ptychio eidikottas* (specialised certificate) for pupils who have followed specialisation courses. – TES *Ptychio* TES.
E	Continuous assessment with no standardised tests.	Pupils' academic results and progress are considered in relation to their personal potential.	Positive assessment in all modules: – qualification as a technician upon completion of a specific intermediate stage of vocational education.
F	Continuous assessment in establishments approved by the *Recteur*.	'Class council's' opinion (during course) or decision (end of course).	National examination: – *certificat d'aptitude professionnelle;* – *brevet d'études professionnelles;* – *baccalauréat professionnel.*
IRL	Continuous assessment.	Automatic promotion.	National examination: – National Vocational Certificate.
I	Written and oral non-standardised tests and observation of pupil progress and behaviour.	Decision by the teachers council during *scrutini* on the basis of academic results (at least 6/10 in each subject) and teachers' observation of the pupil's behaviour at school (at least 8/10).	After three years, qualification examination before examining boards of teachers of the school and two external assessors: – Qualification certificate. After a further two years, a school-leaving examination in vocational schools: – *diploma di maturità professionale* which combines the results from national final examinations and tests during training.

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Table 35. (cont.) Assessment and certification in upper secondary vocational education, 1995/1996

	Assessment during education		Certification procedures
L	Continuous assessment.	Decision by the 'class council' on the basis of the results over the year.	On completion of the vocational branch, national examination at the end of the apprenticeship (theory and practice): – *certificat d'aptitude technique et professionnelle* (CATP). Upon completion of the technician's training branch, national examination: – *diplôme de technicien*. On completion of the technical branch, national examination: – *diplôme de fin d'études secondaires techniques*.
NL	Continuous assessment with no standardised tests.	Decision by the teachers' council on the basis of academic results.	Internal examination: – certificate of MBO completion. The examination syllabus for the MBO is set by the school, except in the case of the components for which the leaving examinations are set nationally, in which case it is set by the Minister for Education, Culture and Science.
A	Continuous assessment.	Decision by the teachers' council on the basis of academic results with a right of appeal.	School leaving examination: – school leaving certificates: *Abschlußzeugnis, Reifeprüfungszeugnis, Reife- und Befähigungsprüfungszeugnis*. The last two give access to university.
P	Continuous assessment.	Assessment by module involving both teacher and pupil; assessment by the 'class council' of a set of modules for each subject (over 10/20). The assessment also includes a vocational proficiency test (PAP) carried out two thirds of the way through the programme. The jury is composed of 4 people, including one trade union or employers' association representative.	No examination. The final mark awarded on completion of studies is the weighted average of the mark obtained at the end of the course (average of the marks obtained in the various subjects) and the mark obtained in the PAP: – certificate of secondary education + level III vocational qualification certificate.
FIN	Continuous assessment with no standardised tests.	Automatic promotion, provided the pupil has satisfactorily completed most classes.	No examination. The results are based on continuous assessment.
S	Continuous assessment with grading on a scale of 4 points.	Automatic promotion.	No general examination. A compulsory standardised test in certain subjects is drawn up at central level.
UK E/W NI	Continuous formative assessment in secondary schools or in Further Education institutions. Pupils may take general education courses (see Table 33) or vocational courses or a combination of these.	Modular courses. On completion of a unit, pupils progress to the next unit.	GNVQs: external tests with criterion-based assessment. NVQs: internal tests, demonstration of competencies and written assignments.
SC	Continuous assessment with moderation in Further Education colleges.	Promotion depends on student attainment.	External tests: – Scottish Certificate of Education at Higher Grade; – General Scottish Vocational Qualification; – HNC, HND.
IS	Continuous assessment and written tests at the end of each semester.	Promotion subject to results.	Continuous assessment (taking into account the results obtained and schoolwork) and internal examinations (written tests) prepared and marked by the school. – *Sveinspróf*, final national examination organised by a committee of employers and trade unions.
LI	Continuous assessment.	Decision by a council (teachers, parents and office for vocational training) on the basis of academic results with a right of appeal.	*Fähigkeitszeugnis*.
NO	At all levels, marks are attributed each term with grading on a scale of 0 to 6; no decimal points are used.	Admission into level I advanced courses requires the prior completion of the basic course or proof of the required skills and knowledge. Similar procedures apply for admission to level II advanced courses.	Written or oral examinations, a combination of the two or practical examinations. There are two types of certificate: – A journeyman's certificate *(fagbrev/svennebrev)* marked on a three-point scale, 'excellent', 'pass' and 'fail'; – A certificate leading to higher education *(avgangsvitnemoal fra den videregående skole)*.

Table 36. Certificates and examinations on completion of upper secondary general education, 1995/96

	Title of the certificate	**Title of the standardised external or supervised examination**
B		
B fr	*Certificat de l'enseignement secondaire supérieur* (CESS)	—
B nl	*Diploma van secundair onderwijs*	—
B de	*Abschlußzeugnis der Oberstufe des Sekundarunterrichts*	—
DK	*Bevis for Studentereksamen*	*Studentereksamen*
	Bevis for Højere Forberedelseseksamen	*Højere Forberedelseseksamen*
	Bevis for Højere Handelseksamen	*Højere Handelseksamen*
	Bevis for Højere Teknisk Eksamen	*Højere Teknisk Eksamen*
D	*Zeugnis der allgemeinen Hochschulreife*	*Abiturprüfung*
EL	*Apolytirio lykeiou/Ptychio eidikotitas*	—
E	*Título de Bachiller*	—
F	*Baccalauréat*	*Baccalauréat*
IRL	Leaving Certificate	Leaving certificate examination
I	*Diploma di maturità*	*Esame di maturità*
L	*Diploma de fin d'études secondaires*	*Examen de fin d'études secondaires*
NL	*Diploma Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs*	*Eindexamen*
	Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs	
A	*Reifeprüfungszeugnis*	*Reifeprüfung*
P	*Certificado de fim de Estudos Secundarios*	—
FIN	*Ylioppilastutkintotodistus*	*Ylioppilastutkinto*
S	*Slutbetyg från gymnasieutbildning*	—
UK E, W, NI	General Certificate of Education Advanced level (GCE A Level)	GCE A Level examination
	General Certificate of Education Advanced Supplementary (GCE AS)	GCE AS examination
SC	Scottish Certificate of Education	Higher Grade
		Certificate of Sixth Year Studies
IS	*Stúdentsprófsskírteini*	—
LI	*Maturitätszeugnis*	*Matura*
NO	*Vitnemål (fra den videregående skole)*	*Eksamen (fra den videregående skole)*

4. Educational measures to combat school failure [1]

School failure[1] is a problem which affects all European Union countries to a greater or lesser degree. Each country endeavours to find solutions to this problem and these vary widely according to the specific features of the various education systems. However, it is possible to divide these measures into three main categories on the basis of their objectives.

Some countries focus on **prevention** through the introduction of new teaching methods and techniques. The aim of the French Community of Belgium's reform of lower secondary education (ages 12 to 14) is to reduce school failure by defining core skills which have to be attained by all pupils, as well as by introducing continuous formative assessment. The Flemish Community of Belgium is concentrating its efforts on enhancing vocational education by organising workshop classes and modular courses, project work, varying teaching approaches and establishing links between school and the socio-economic sector. In Ireland, pupils are divided into streams for certain subjects; they also have the option of completing upper secondary education in three years rather than two. In Austria, *Hauptschule* pupils are also streamed according to ability in some subjects. Italy is endeavouring to provide better information (collaboration between *scuola media* and upper secondary school) and to rethink its apprenticeship and assessment system in order to improve the transition between lower and upper secondary education at the end of compulsory education. Luxembourg offers a two-stage apprenticeship system in the vocational branch of the technical *lycée*. This system enables pupils who are capable of learning the practical side of a trade, but have difficulties in keeping up with the theoretical side, to follow theoretical training at their own pace. Following the introduction of the system of comprehensive schools, Scottish teachers manage to cope with mixed-ability classes calling for varying teaching techniques and the introduction of continuous formative assessment.

In Sweden, the specially designed programme and the individual programme are alternatives for pupils in the *gymnasieskola* (upper secondary education) with special needs or with interests other than those covered by the 16 national programmes. The specially designed programme is equivalent to the national programmes but may comprise courses from several national programmes and locally devised courses in addition to the core subjects.

The individual programme aims to assist pupils who have difficulties pursuing other upper secondary education and to enable people to combine a job providing vocational training with the study of particular subjects at an upper secondary school.

Another measure for countering school failure is **support teaching**. A large number of countries (Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, United Kingdom) make room in the timetable for support teaching aimed at pupils experiencing difficulty. In Scotland, it is now more common for pupils experiencing difficulty to receive assistance from special learning support teachers in the classroom itself. In Belgium, in the French and German-speaking Communities, new information technologies are often used as a support teaching tool. In Italy, extra coaching is given to pupils in vocational education to help them make up for lost time or to meet specific local demands. In Luxembourg, children in lower secondary school who encounter difficulty in assimilating German can follow lessons in French-speaking classes (with appropriate German lessons). In Spain, pupils experiencing difficulties are given extra lessons by a support teacher. Other measures have been taken, including programmes adapted to the special problems of pupils *(adaptaciones curriculares)* and individualised programmes for pupils having more serious difficulties. In Portugal, pupils with particular learning difficulties may, if they so desire, benefit from educational support measures, provided they are regular and attentive pupils and have not cancelled their enrolment in the subject in question.

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[1] For further details, consult *Measures to Combat School Failure: A Challenge for the Construction of Europe*, EURYDICE (1994).

The third measure is a combination of prevention and support teaching, in that it offers pupils an educational and/or vocational **guidance** service throughout secondary education. The organisation of the various guidance services in all the countries concerned is discussed in greater depth in Chapter 1 of this study. A good many countries have, to varying degrees, introduced a combination of these three measures. For example, in the field of prevention, Iceland offers an extra semester or year of study to pupils leaving lower secondary education who are experiencing difficulties in the main subjects prior to their entry into upper secondary programmes. In the field of support teaching, extra teaching is offered in mathematics and Icelandic, and pupils are provided with guidance counselling from lower secondary school onwards. In England and Wales, the Dearing Report (1996), includes recommendations on the introduction of nationally recognised awards for low-achievers and under-attainers within a national framework of qualifications for 16- to 19-year-olds.

Teacher training also appears to be an important factor in combating school failure. The following chapter addresses two aspects of teacher training – pedagogical instruction and the role of in-service training.

III – Secondary teacher training

Teachers need a high level of general education to deepen their knowledge of the subjects they teach and to increase their capacity to acquire complex professional skills. They should also develop an appreciation of pedagogical processes as well as practical expertise to meet the educational needs of diverse student populations. Teachers of all levels of secondary education now usually have the advanced general education which previously was confined to those who taught in upper or selective academic schools. Pedagogical and practical training is provided increasingly for teachers of all types of secondary education. Furthermore, initial training is only a beginning. Career-long in-service training has become more important as the challenges of secondary school teaching change and as teachers need to refresh themselves and their skills.

Current variations in initial teacher education between countries can be understood by referring to patterns which preceded the widening of access to secondary education. Prospective primary school teachers left elementary education to enter establishments at secondary level which offered more advanced coverage of the subjects taught in primary schools together with courses in methods of teaching. Selective, academic secondary schools, in contrast, recruited teachers with university degrees but not necessarily any pedagogical or practical training. These two types of teacher had separate grades, salary scales and conditions of service. This system survived in its entirety in Italy until reforms in 1990. The training of secondary school teachers in Italy is still in the process of reform. In future, a two-year university postgraduate course will include didactics of the subjects to be taught (700 hours) and practical training (at least 300 hours).

When lower secondary schooling became universal, the position of teachers was often anomalous. Some, as in France, had worked in primary schools and were promoted to secondary education positions while others had the background of traditional secondary school teachers. In some countries, initial training for teachers of this level continues to reflect this duality with the survival of the old primary school teacher model where teachers were trained in separate non-university institutions as in Belgium and Denmark or in concurrent systems in a greater number of countries. Elsewhere a single structure of secondary school initial teacher training has been introduced which is closer to that of the old academic secondary school type, with emphasis on acquisition of a university degree to which a shorter period of professional training is added. At present, both types of training of lower secondary school teachers co-exist in several countries.

Training systems face a number of common issues. Lower secondary teachers are not always expected to have the same level of educational background and depth of subject knowledge as those in upper secondary schools and vocational courses may be taught by teachers with a lower level of training. The view persists that a knowledge of the teaching subject is the main qualification needed by teachers intending to work in upper secondary education. Within professional training, different weight is given to theoretical pedagogical studies and to school-based practice. School practice may be integrated with the rest of the professional course in higher education institutions, or it may be separated into a phase more directly controlled by schools or other authorities.

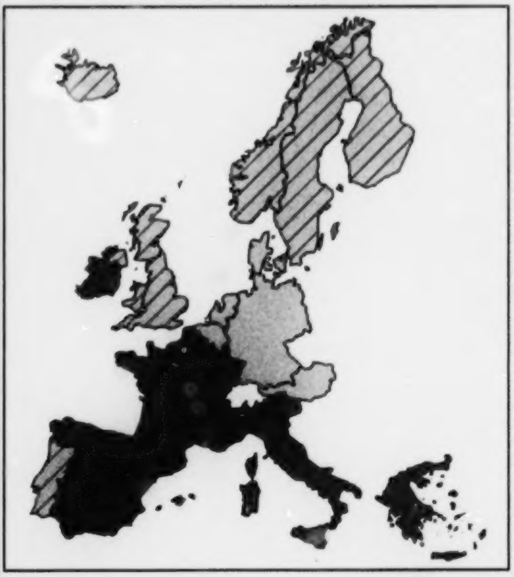
1. Structures of initial teacher training

1.1. Concurrent and consecutive systems

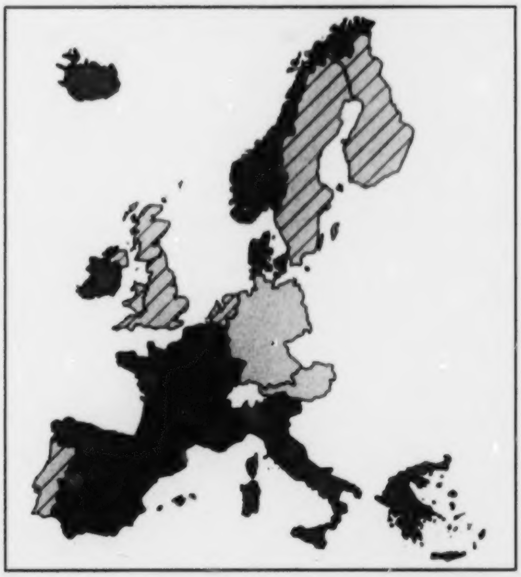
Pedagogical and practical training may occur at the same time as general education (concurrent model) or after the general education part has been completed (consecutive model). Both systems are widespread in lower secondary initial teacher training. The concurrent type is provided for all aspiring lower secondary school teachers in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and, for some, in countries such as Portugal, Sweden and Norway. The consecutive model has been applied to almost all lower secondary school teacher training in Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg and Scotland (see Map 1).

There is more uniformity in the training of teachers for upper secondary level where the consecutive model is the norm in most countries. The concurrent model is only standard for these teachers in Germany and Austria. The concurrent model for upper secondary teachers in Austria and for both lower and upper secondary school teachers in Germany has also a consecutive element. In the first phase, students follow general education courses as well as undertaking studies in pedagogy and school placements. In the second phase, training is school-based and consists of pedagogical studies and practical teaching. In most concurrent systems, school placement is weighted towards the end rather than at the beginning of the course. Though some are prepared in the concurrent manner in the Netherlands, Portugal, Finland and Sweden, in practice few students trained this way in these countries (except in Finland) are likely to enter upper secondary teaching. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland,[1] all school teachers irrespective of the level at which they will be teaching must have qualified teacher status, which may be obtained either by means of concurrent or consecutive models of initial teacher training. However, most secondary school teachers follow the consecutive route. In Scotland, concurrent courses are taken generally by those wishing to teach in primary schools.

Map 1. Initial training of lower secondary school teachers, 1995/96



Map 2. Initial training of upper secondary school teachers, 1995/96



░ Concurrent model ■ Consecutive model ▨ Concurrent + Consecutive

Source: Eurydice.

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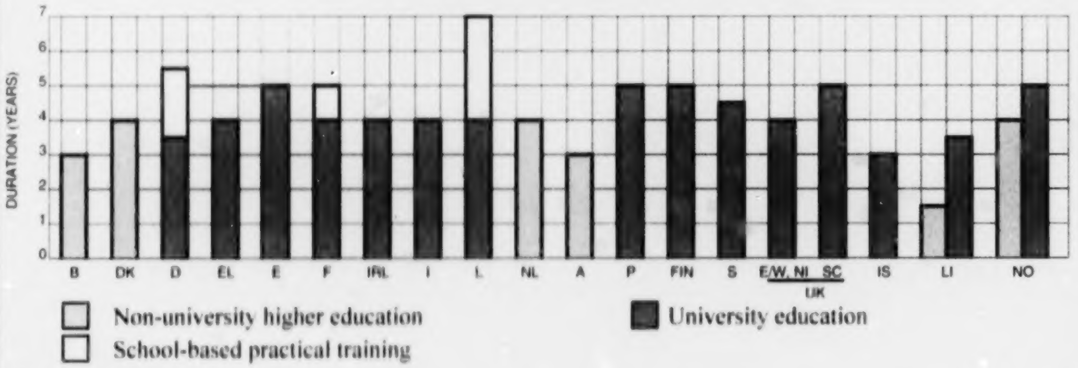
[1] The descriptions in this chapter relating to England, Wales and Northern Ireland focus on the most common routes to Qualified Teacher Status for secondary school teachers and do not deal with requirements for teaching in Further Education institutions.

1.2. Level and duration of training for teachers of general secondary education

All future secondary school teachers, whether trained in the concurrent or consecutive model, now receive a general education at higher education level. Teachers of lower and upper secondary general education share the same level of initial training in university institutions in Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom. In contrast, lower secondary school teachers are prepared in non-university establishments separately from university educated upper secondary teachers in Belgium and Denmark. Such separation also occurs in Iceland, but both kinds of training occur in university institutions. In Norway, there are non-university institutions specifically for lower secondary teachers and universities which train for both lower and upper levels. In Germany, the Netherlands and Austria, the distinction between lower and upper secondary school teachers is not clear-cut. Some types of training in these three countries are for teachers in lower secondary schools in both university and non-university institutions (except in Germany),[2] while other types of training in universities cater for teaching in schools which cover both the lower and upper stages.

The length of time spent in general education and professional training varies from three years for lower secondary school teachers in the concurrent type in Belgium, Austria and Iceland to seven years in the consecutive mode in Luxembourg. In most countries, the norm is four or five years. The length of the general education phase in the consecutive type ranges from three years for many or most secondary school teachers in France, Ireland, England and Wales up to six years for some in Norway. The professional training element of the consecutive model can take place over a very short period, such as six months in Denmark (for upper secondary education), or run to three years for the teacher training course (Luxembourg).

Graph 11. Initial training of lower secondary school teachers (general education), 1995/96



Source: Eurydice.

Germany: General training for secondary education can take four-and-a-half years as well as the three-and-a-half-years shown here.

Germany, Austria and Iceland: There are two types of training of which one is shown here. The other, which qualifies teachers for both levels of education, is shown in Graph 12.

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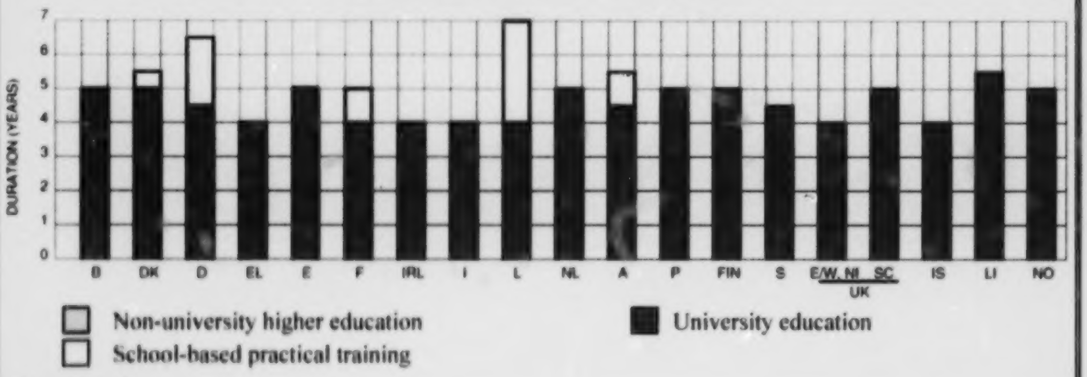
[2] In Germany, *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* teachers are prepared either in universities or in teacher training colleges *(Pädagogische Hochschulen)*, which are equivalent to universities.

Graph 12. Initial training of upper secondary school teachers (general education), 1995/96



Source: Eurydice.

Belgium: Intending upper secondary teachers may follow the professional course part-time.
Spain: The average time for the general education phase is shown. It may vary between four and six years.
France: The graph depicts *professeurs certifiés* with a *licence* who spend two years in professional training, the second of which is based in schools. Those holding a *maitrise* will have completed four years of general education.
Luxembourg: The general education phase occurs in universities in other countries and must be at least four years in length.
Netherlands: Some upper secondary grade 1 teachers are also trained in non-university HBOs. All professional courses may be taken part-time.
Finland: Training for general secondary school teachers has always been provided at university level.
United Kingdom: Initial teacher training courses are jointly directed by higher education institutions and schools. Some students in Scotland will have completed only three years of general higher education.
Liechtenstein, Norway: In the consecutive course, general education may be four years or six years according to subject.

School-based types are defined as those in which the initial teacher training occurs during school placement.

Lower secondary school teachers receive a shorter initial training than their upper secondary school colleagues in Belgium and Denmark, as is the case also for some, but not all, teachers in lower secondary education in Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and Norway. Elsewhere, the general education phase is the same for both levels. Shorter courses usually lead to non-university diplomas of a lower level than those obtained by upper secondary school teachers. The variations between higher education courses in different countries prevent the equation of length of training with relative teacher status across countries.

The divergence between countries in the general education component of teacher education is also the product of differing policies for the reform of higher education since the 1960s. In Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Austria and Norway, there are non-university institutions of higher education with specific professional training functions, which have declined or disappeared in Spain, France, Italy, Sweden and the United Kingdom.[1] In Finland, the training of secondary school teachers has always been provided at university level. These broad policies have an impact on the institutional arrangements for teacher training, especially in helping to remove differences between the level of general education expected of teachers in lower and upper secondary education where all are trained in university institutions.

Departures from these overall patterns should be noted. In the Scandinavian countries, as also in Portugal, the combination of primary and lower secondary stages in a single type of school brings together primary and lower secondary teachers in one institution and separates them from upper secondary teachers. But lower and upper secondary school teachers are trained in the same way, except in Denmark. In each of these countries, except in Portugal, a distinction is made between the training of 'class' teachers for the primary phase and 'subject' teachers for the lower secondary stage. In France, the unification of secondary school teacher training into one consecutive system which prepares teachers

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[1] In Greece, Ireland and Portugal, there are non-university institutions of higher education which train teachers for the primary and pre-primary levels.

(professeurs certifiés) for both *collèges* (lower secondary) and *lycées* (upper secondary) has still left the elite grade of *agrégés* who complete a further one or two years of general education.

1.3. Location of training

Professional training generally takes place in or under the direction of institutions of higher education (see Table 38). In some cases, it is fully removed from this sector. For upper secondary education teachers in Denmark and all teachers in Luxembourg, the whole professional training cycle is based in schools with supplementary courses provided by other school authorities. In Germany and, for academic secondary school teachers, in Austria, the last phase of training is provided in schools. In France, a similar system was abolished following the 1989 reform of teacher training when *Instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres* (IUFM) were established with links to one or several universities. However, the final year of training continues to be based largely in schools. In England and Wales, professional training is jointly directed by university level institutions and schools, although in 25 cases consortia of schools take a leading role. These institutional variations reflect the tension between views that teacher training is an extension of general higher education and that it should be based mainly on practical experience in schools. This tension may also be seen in the varying relationship between pedagogical and practical training described in section 2 below (Pedagogical and practical training in initial teacher education).

1.4. Selection of applicants and entry to employment

Admission to training for teaching in secondary general education in every country now requires the same qualifications as for admission to higher education and, for consecutive courses, a higher education degree. There are additional admission requirements in some countries. Similarly, direct entry to employment may be possible or even guaranteed after completion of teacher training, but in some countries there are further hurdles (see Table 38).

General admission requirements for higher education vary between countries. Normally the final certificate awarded on successful completion of upper secondary general education is required, but there are exceptions for older entrants in some countries and further demands, including higher grades in final certificates, to enter particular establishments or courses within them. Candidates for concurrent teacher training courses and for the general education programmes which precede professional training in consecutive schemes are expected to have these qualifications.

In a few cases, there may be specific additional admission requirements. Entrants to both concurrent courses and the professional phase of consecutive courses in Ireland need to demonstrate their competence in the Irish language. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, interviews are conducted by staff of higher education institutions and the teachers involved in training to determine the suitability for teaching of applicants to both concurrent and consecutive courses. Interviews to assess suitability are also part of the admission procedure in Finland.

There are sometimes more specific demands on entry to the professional phases of consecutive courses. The normal requirement is a higher education degree of a specified level. Interviews may be used in Ireland where the demand for places exceeds supply, and in Scotland. In Germany, the first state examination must be passed at the end of the first stage of the concurrent course before a period of school-based practical training.

The distinction between entry to training and selection for employment as a teacher is not clear-cut in some countries. At one extreme, all secondary school teachers in Italy are appointed to teaching posts after passing the *abilitazione* examination which includes questions on didactics and pedagogy, for which there is as yet very little formal training.[4] Aspiring upper secondary school teachers in Denmark must first be appointed to a school, after which they embark on six months of on-the-job training, but performance is assessed before formal qualification. Trainees in Luxembourg for all levels of schooling must pass a competitive examination on completing higher education outside the country before undertaking a three-year school-based combination of salaried work and training. French trainees, on completion of general university courses, follow one year of courses in an IUFM before taking the competitive CAPES (Part 1) examination and, if they are successful, embarking on a second year of training as salaried *stagiaires* who prepare for the qualifying examinations (Part 2) *(épreuves de qualification).*

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[4] A two-year university-based course preparing for the *abilitazione* has been agreed in principle but has yet to be implemented.

Table 37. School-based practical and professional teacher training – selection for, and whether salaried or not, 1995/96

School-based salaried training. Selection for entry to professional training.	Germany (lower and upper secondary). France (lower and upper secondary). Luxembourg (lower and upper secondary).
School-based salaried training. No competitive examinations for entry to training.	Denmark (upper secondary). Austria (academic secondary).
School-based unsalaried training. No competitive examination for entry to training.	United Kingdom (lower and upper secondary). Liechtenstein (lower and upper secondary).

In the countries mentioned in the previous paragraph, admission to a particular phase of training guarantees employment, as well as offering a salary during school-based training, provided that assessment or evaluation is satisfactory. Qualification at the end of training elsewhere permits employment, but gives the holder no automatic job entitlement. In Spain, competitive state examinations must be taken after qualification to obtain permanent employment as a state teacher.

Conditions of employment for qualified teachers may also reinforce certain patterns of teacher training. In Belgium, Denmark, Germany and Austria, for instance, teachers in lower and upper secondary education have different salary scales, while in Austria and Norway they are employed by different levels of public administration. These differences may be linked to the separation of the initial training of the two levels of teacher.

Table 38. Teacher training and qualification, 1995/96

A. Lower Secondary General Education (Separate Route)

Country and type	Institution and admission requirements	Length of general higher education and professional training	Final qualification and grade of teacher
B (concurrent)	*Hautes Écoles/Hogeschoolen.* Higher education entrance.	Three years.	*Diplôme d'agrégé d'enseignement secondaire inférieur* (also *régent*). *Diploma van geaggregeerde voor het lager secundair onderwijs.*
DK (concurrent)	*Lærerseminarium.* Higher education entrance.	Three-and-a-half years.	*Lærereksamen.*
D (concurrent)	Universities and equivalent higher education institutions – *Universitäten-Gesamthochschulen. Pädagogische Hochschulen* (concurrent general education and first professional phase). Training centres and schools – *Vorbereitungsdienst an Studienseminaren und Ausbildungsschulen* (second professional phase). Higher education entrance (concurrent general education and first professional phase). Pass in first state examination for teachers – *Erste Staatsprüfung* (second professional stage).	Three-and-a-half to four-and-a-half years (concurrent general education and first professional phase). Two years (second professional phase).	Second state examination for teachers – *Zweite Staatsprüfung.*
NL (concurrent)	Non-university higher education colleges – HBO. Higher education entrance.	Four years (full- or part-time).	*Leraar voortgezet onderwijs tweedegraads.*
A (concurrent)	Teacher colleges *(Pädogogische Akademien).* Higher education entrance.	Three years.	*Lehramtsprüfung für Hauptschulen.*
IS (concurrent/ consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance.	Three years for the concurrent model. Four years for the consecutive model.	*Kennarapróf.*
LI (concurrent)	*Pädagogische Hochschule.* Universities (only studies in Switzerland included).	One-and-a-half years. Three-and-a-half years.	*Diplom als Lehrkraft an der Oberschule.* *Diplom als Sekundarlehrkraft I (Realschule).*
NO (concurrent)	College of Education. Higher education entrance.	Four years.	*4-årig allmennlærer-utdanning.*

Germany, Netherlands, Austria: Lower secondary teacher training does not qualify to teach in the lower secondary phase of academic schools (Germany – *Gymnasium).*
Netherlands: Also qualifies to teach in vocational upper secondary schools.

Table 38. Teacher training and qualification, 1995/96

B. Upper Secondary General Education (Separate Route)

Country and type	Institution and admission requirements	Length of general higher education and professional training	Final qualification and grade of teacher
B (consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance (general phase). University degree – *licence/licentiaat* (professional phase).	Four or five years' general education. Some professional courses (optional) during the final year.	*Diplôme d'agrégé d'enseignement secondaire supérieur/Diploma van geaggregeerde voor het hoger onderwijs.*
DK (consecutive)	Universities then upper secondary schools. Higher education entrance (general phase). University Master's degree – *Cand.art.* Appointment to upper secondary school teaching position (professional phase).	Five or six years' general education and six months' practical training.	*Paedagogikum.*
D (concurrent)	Universities or equivalent higher education institutions – *Universitäten-Gesamthochschulen* (concurrent general education and first professional phase). Training centres and schools – *Vorbereitungsdienst an Studienseminaren und Ausbildungsschulen* (second professional stage). Higher education entrance (concurrent general education and first professional phase). Pass in first state examination for teachers – *Erste Staatsprüfung* (second professional stage).	Four-and-a-half years (concurrent general education and first professional phase). Two years (second professional phase).	Second state examination for teachers – *Zweite Staatsprüfung.*
NL (consecutive)	Universities Higher education entrance (general education phase). University degree – *Doctorandus* – which gives adequate preparation for the teaching subject together with a two month 'Introduction to Teaching' course. Non-university higher education college – HBO. Higher education entrance or Grade 2 teacher's certificate (additional phase).	Four years (general education/subject study). One year (professional). Four years (general and professional) or three years after a Grade 2 certificate depending on the subject.	*Leraar voortgezet onderwijs eerstegraads.*
A (concurrent)	Universities (general education and first professional phase). Academic secondary schools and institutes of in-service training (second professional phase). Higher education entrance (general education and first professional phase). University degree – *Magister* (second professional phase).	Four-and-a-half years (general education and first professional phase). One year (second professional phase – *Unterrichtspraktikum).*	*Lehrberechtigung für das Lehramt an Höheren Schulen.*
IS (consecutive)	Universities. Higher education (general education phase). Bachelor degree (professional phase).	Three years (general education). One year (professional phase).	Diploma in Education. *Uppeldis-og kennslufræði til kennsluréttinda.*
LI (consecutive)	Universities. Higher education (general education phase). *Lizentiat* (professional phase).	Four to six years (general education). One-and-a-half years (professional phase).	*Diplom für das Höhere Lehramt.*

In **Germany, the Netherlands** and **Austria**, these teachers also work in the lower secondary stage of academic schools and, in **Belgium**, teach certain subjects (mainly foreign languages) in lower secondary schools.

Table 38. Teacher training and qualification, 1995/96

C. Lower and Upper Secondary General Education (Common Route)

Country and type	Institution and admission requirements	Length of general higher education and professional training	Final qualification and grade of teacher
D (concurrent)	University or equivalent higher education institutions – *Universitäten-Gesamthochschulen* (concurrent general education and first professional phase). Training centres and schools – *Vorbereitungsdienst an Studienseminaren und Ausbildungsschulen* (second professional stage). Higher education entrance (concurrent general education and first professional phase). Pass in first state examination for teachers – *Erste Staatsprüfung* (second professional stage).	Four-and-a-half years (concurrent general education and first professional phase). Two years (second professional phase).	Second state examination for teachers – *Zweite Staatsprüfung.*
EL (Consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance.	Four to five years.	University degree – *Ptychio.*
E (Consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance (general phase). University degree – *Licenciado* or equivalents – *Diplomado* or equivalents in some fields (professional phase).	Four to six years (general education). One year (professional phase).	*Certificado de Aptitud Pedagógica. Profesor de Enseñanza Secundaria.* Competitive examination for permanent appointment.
F (Consecutive)	Universities and other institutions of full higher education (general education phase). *Instituts Universitaires de Formation de Maîtres* (professional phase). Higher education entrance (general phase). University degree – *Licence* or equivalent – and sucess in competitive examination *(concours de recrutement).*	Three years (general education phase). Two years (professional phase).	*Certificat d'aptitude au professorat de l'enseignement du second degré* (CAPES) *Professeur certifié.* Appointment as salaried *stagiaire* at beginning of the second year of professional training. Final appointment on professional qualification.
	Higher education entrance (general phase). University degree – *Maîtrise.* Success in competitive state examination. *Agrégation* (professional phase).	Four years (general phase). Two years (professional phase).	*Agrégation – Professeur agrégé.* Appointment as salaried *stagiaire* on achievement of *agrégation.* Final appointment on professional qualification.
IRL (Consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance (general phase). University degree – BA, BSc, BCom.	Three or four years (general phase). One year (professional phase).	Higher Diploma in Education.
I (Consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance.	Four to six years (general education with some didactics).	University degree – *Diploma di Laurea.* Permanent appointment after success in competitive examination. *Abilitazione alla professione.*
L (Consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance (general phase). Degree from a foreign university. Competitive entrance examination – *concours de recrutement* (professional phase).	Four years minimum (general phase). Three years (professional phase).	*Professeur d'enseignement secondaire.* Appointment as salaried *stagiaire* in a school before professional phase. Final appointment on professional qualification.
P (Concurrent and consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance.	Six years (concurrent). Three or four years general education, two years professional training (consecutive).	*Licenciatura em Ensino.*
FIN (Concurrent and Consecutive)	Universities. Higher Education entrance.	Five or six years.	Master's degree – *Maisterin tutkinto* – in a specified subject of study.

Table 38. Teacher training and qualification, 1995/96

C. Lower and Upper Secondary General Education (Common Route)

Country and type	Institution and admission requirements	Length of general higher education and professional training	Final qualification and grade of teacher
S (Concurrent and consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance.	Four-and-a-half years.	*Grundskollärarexamen med inriktning mot undervisning i årskurserna 4-9* (for years 4 to 9 lower secondary). *Gymnasielärarexamen* (upper secondary).
UK (Concurrent)	Universities. Higher education entrance and assessment of suitability for teaching including medical examination.	Four years.	Bachelor of Education and similar titles. Qualified Teacher Status.
UK (Consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance (general education phase). University degree and assessment of suitability for teaching (professional phase).	Three or four years (general education). One year (professional training).	Postgraduate Certificate of Education. Qualified Teacher Status. Teaching Qualification (Scotland).
NO (Consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance (general education phase). University degree (professional phase).	Four years or six years (general education). One year professional training.	*Praktisk-pedagogisk utdanning for allmennfag.*

1.5. Teachers for technical and vocational education

Patterns of training for teachers in technical and vocational secondary education are similar to those for teachers of general subjects, though there are often separate specialised institutions. The period of general education may be shorter and the expected level of diploma may be lower for some of these prospective teachers in the consecutive type of training in most countries (see Table 39), but often there are also admission requirements of specified years of professional experience which do not apply to teachers in general education. The professional experience requirement ranges from at least one year in Germany to five years in Denmark and France. Training may be in institutions which are separate from those for teachers in general education in several countries, as is often the case for teachers of art, music and, in some cases, physical education. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, there is no separate category of technical/vocational teacher. School teachers in technical subjects must satisfy the criteria applied to other school teachers. Those employed in further education institutions are subject to different regulations. In Scotland, although it is not compulsory for further education teachers to hold a teaching qualification, they are actively encouraged to work towards one while in service.

In most other countries, training of vocational education teachers is not clearly separated from that for those in general education.

Distinctions may be made between teachers of craft and other vocational subjects, who often have a lower level of general education, and those of technical subjects with qualifications equivalent to upper secondary general education teachers. In some countries, vocational teachers may teach in vocational schools at lower secondary as well as upper secondary level.

Table 39. Teacher Training and Qualification. Vocational Education, 1995/1996

Country and type	**Institution and admission requirements**	**Length of general higher education and professional training**	**Final qualification and grade of teacher**
B (Concurrent)	*Promotion sociale* (adult and second chance). Work experience.	Two or three years.	*Certificat d'aptitude pédagogique. Getuigschrift pedagogische bekwaamheid.*
DK (Consecutive)	Universities or other university sector institutions (general phase). *Danmarks Erhvervspædogogiske Læreruddannelse* (Danish Institute for the Educational Training of Vocational Teachers) (professional phase).	Teachers of general subjects – five years (general phase). One year (professional phase).	*Pædagogikum.*
	Teachers of general subjects – as for upper secondary general education teachers plus 2 years' professional experience. Appointment as teacher in a vocational college.		
	Teachers of vocational subjects – upper secondary level vocational qualification plus 5 years' professional experience. Appointment as teacher in a vocational college (professional phase).	Teachers of vocational subjects – no general higher education. Professional phase as for teachers of general subjects.	
D (Concurrent)	As for general upper secondary, but at least one year of work experience is also required.	As for general upper secondary.	Second state examination for teachers – *Zweite Staatsprüfung.*
	Dual system. Craftsmen-teachers in the workplace *(Ausbilder and Meister).* Part-time courses. Certificate of vocational competence – *Berufsabschluß* (professional phase).	120-200 hours part-time courses.	
EL (Consecutive)	Universities and technological higher education institutions (general phase). Technical and vocational teacher training institutes – PATES/SELETE. Higher education entrance (general phase).	Four to five years (general). Six months for university graduates, one year non-university higher education graduates (professional).	*Ptychio* and teaching diploma – PATES.
E (Consecutive)	Universities. Higher education entrance (general phase). University degree – *Diplomado* or equivalents (professional phase).	Three years (general phase). One year (professional phase).	*Certificado de Aptitud Pedagógica Profesor Técnico de Formación Profesional.* Competitive examination for permanent appointment.
F (Consecutive)	As for general upper secondary, but also one year's professional experience additional admission requirement.	As for upper secondary general.	*Certificat d'aptitude au professorat de l'enseignement technique* (CAPET). *Professeur de l'enseignement technique.*
	Higher education entrance is required (general phase). University degree, or university diploma and five years' work experience or five years' work experience at professional level (*de cadre*) without higher education (professional phase).	No higher education or two or three years (general phase). Two years (professional phase).	CAPLP2. *Professeur de lycée professionnel.*

Table 39. (cont.) Teacher Training and Qualification. Vocational Education, 1995/1996

Country and type	Institution and admission requirements	Length of general higher education and professional training	Final qualification and grade of teacher
IRL (Concurrent)	Specialist institutions of higher education and universities. Higher education entrance.	Three to five years.	Specialist diplomas and degrees.
NL (Concurrent)	Non-university higher education colleges (HBO), technical training colleges (PTH) and agricultural teacher training colleges (STOAS). Higher education entrance (general education phase). Vocational qualifications of HBO (professional phase).	Four years full-time. Four to six years part-time.	*Leraar voortgezet onderwijs tweedegraads.*
A (Concurrent)	Same as for upper secondary general above. Some in vocational teacher colleges – *Berufspädagogische Akademien* as above, except that for some craft teachers vocational qualifications and six years' practical experience may replace higher education entrance requirements.		
FIN (Consecutive)	University or vocational college of education. Higher vocational diploma or university Master's degree plus one to three years' work experience.	Four to five years (general education). One year full-time or two years part-time (professional training).	Diploma in teaching.
LI (Concurrent)	Dual system. Craftsmen-teachers in the workplace *(Ausbilder and Meister)*. Part-time courses. Certificate of vocational competence – *Berufsabschluß* (professional phase).	About 100 hours part-time courses.	
NO (Consecutive)	Colleges of education. Vocational qualification, four years' work experience (general education phase).	Two years (general education). One year (professional training).	*Praktisk-pedagogisk utdanning for yrkesfag.*

2. Pedagogical and practical training in initial teacher education

Pedagogical training is understood to mean courses intended to enrich prospective teachers' theoretical knowledge of education and to guide their teaching. It also includes didactics, the training in methods of teaching particular subjects or teaching areas. Practical training includes periods in schools and classrooms during either observation placements or teaching practice.

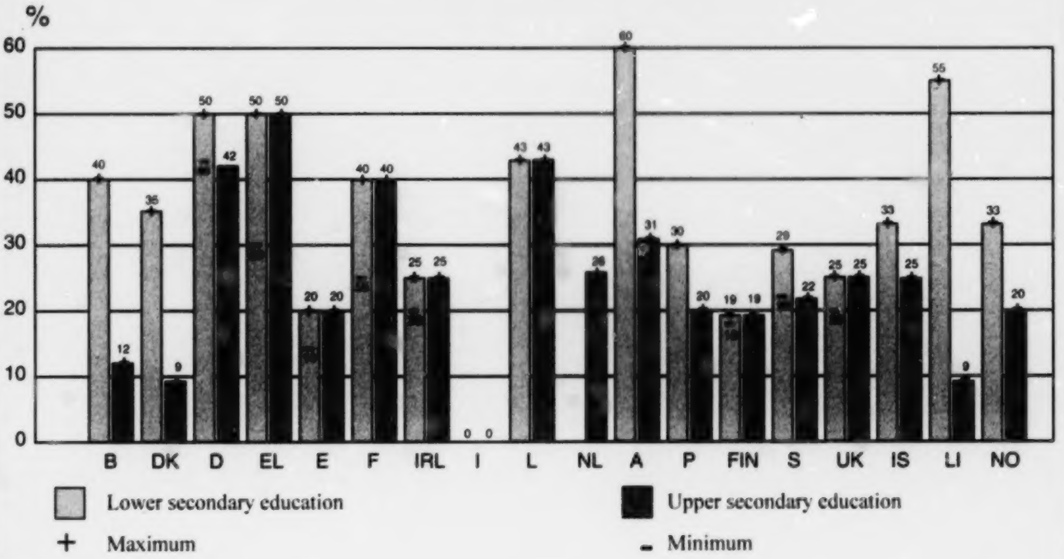
There are variations between countries in the balance of general education, subject-based studies and those related to professional training. The different elements of professional study also vary in the priority given to them across countries. Furthermore, terminology can be confusing when the same professional areas are given different names just as when similar names apply to rather different kinds of course.

The three elements are usually identified separately. Theoretical study of education in most countries is termed pedagogy but this word has a different meaning (closer to didactics) in Ireland and the United Kingdom where the equivalent to pedagogy is Foundations of Education (Ireland) or Educational Studies (United Kingdom). The subject matter, however, is much the same across all countries including, for instance, the psychology, sociology, philosophy and history of education. The study of methods of teaching is most commonly named didactics, but again this word does not have universal currency and is frequently substituted by methodology or professional studies (Ireland). Teaching practice is the most universally agreed term, though 'school experience' or 'school placement' is also used to reflect better the observation of educational processes as well as the development of students' skills in classroom teaching.

There are differences across countries in the relationship between general education, subject studies, pedagogy and didactics. Even the distinction between general education or subject studies and didactics is not always clear. In France, the distinction is between *formation disciplinaire* or didactics which has more time than *formation générale* or educational theory. In England and Wales, theory of education and child development have the purpose of helping students to teach competently, secure effective learning and to manage pupil behaviour. General education can function to deepen the understanding of future teachers but it also provides them with the knowledge of the subjects they will teach. Didactics or methods of teaching these subjects can be provided in general education phases of teacher education as in Belgium (upper secondary), Greece and Italy. It is not clear how far such didactics are practical or are concerned with the history or philosophy of the subject.

Pedagogical and practical training often has more weight when combined with general education in the training of lower secondary teachers (especially where they study in concurrent systems) than in that of upper secondary teachers. One measure is the time given to pedagogical and practical training as a proportion of total periods spent in general and professional education (see Graphs 13 and 14 and Table 40). In most countries where the training of the two kinds of teacher is distinguished, lower secondary teachers spend relatively more time on professional matters than their upper secondary equivalents. In eight countries (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Luxembourg, Austria, Iceland and Norway), future lower secondary school teachers spend at least one third of their period of training in professional studies but in only three (France, Luxembourg and Austria) does the same apply to upper secondary school teacher training. Belgium and Denmark are at the extremes with respectively 40% and 35% of time for lower secondary teachers spent in professional courses compared with an average of 9% for upper secondary teachers. In Germany, the time spent on pedagogical and practical training is high for teachers of both levels since each kind undertakes a two-year traineeship after a first phase which also includes some pedagogical and practical training. Yet future upper secondary teachers devote a smaller proportion of time in this first phase to pedagogical study (6 to 9%) than their lower secondary equivalents (18 to 26%) (see Table 40). Older views that only future teachers of young children need more educational theory and practice may still be widespread.

Graph 13. Pedagogical and practical training as a proportion of the total preparation of teachers, 1995/96



Source: Eurydice.

Based on data contained in Table 40.

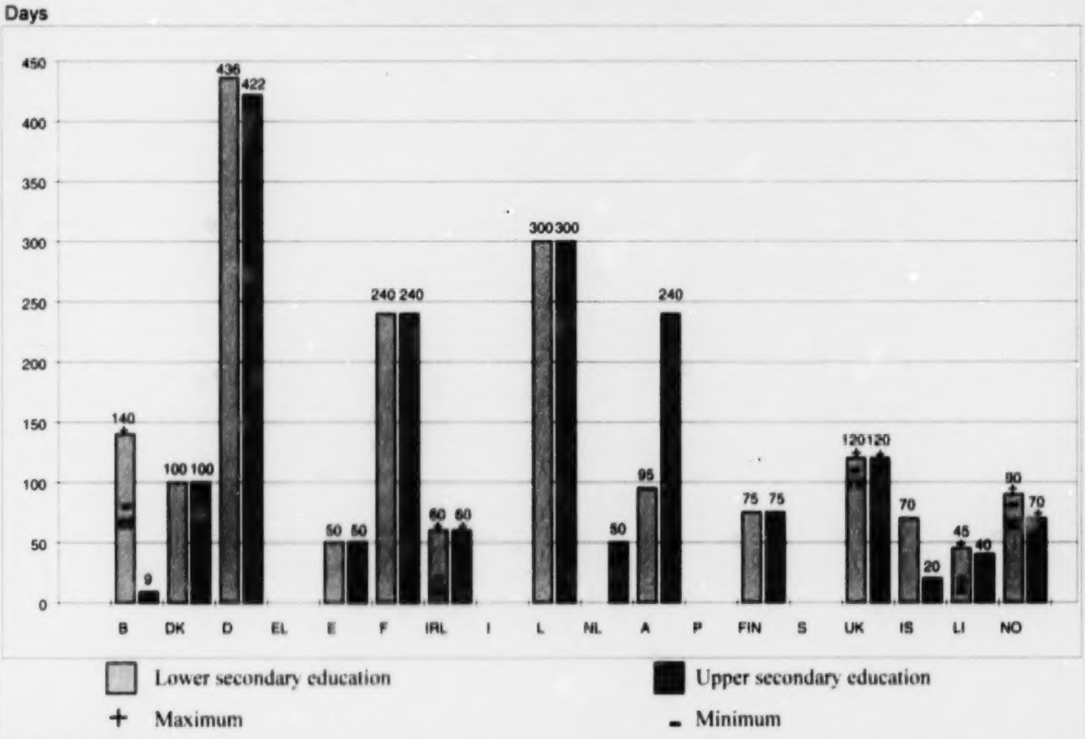
The training of vocational and some specialist teachers – for example of art or physical education – is ignored where this training follows a different pattern.

In **Greece, the Netherlands** (lower secondary) and **Italy** (where subject didactics is the only professional training), decisions are made in each institution about the balance between general education and professional training. Figures for the **United Kingdom** are based on the consecutive type of training (see Table 40C).

As shown in Graph 14, the countries that provide high proportions of professional teacher training for both lower and upper secondary teachers usually also have long periods of school-based training (Germany, France, Luxembourg and Austria). Salaried trainees also spend much time in school-based activities in France and Luxembourg. In other countries, such as the United Kingdom, the school-based element of initial training has even been extended.

School placement may become more important as a way for students not only to acquire practice in teaching but also to relate their theoretical learning of pedagogy to real life situations. In some countries, the time devoted to school experience is small (especially in the consecutive systems of Belgium, Spain and Ireland, where it occupies fewer than 50 days), while elsewhere it is substantial, notably in Germany where school-based training is part of the first phase and the whole of the second phase of two years. Students have between 100 and 160 days of school experience in Denmark, France and the United Kingdom and in concurrent teacher training for lower secondary education in Belgium. Evidence of time spent in schools is not available for all countries since in Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden and Norway the balance between university and school-based activities is decided by individual training establishments.

Graph 14. Days spent on school placements – teacher training for lower and upper secondary education, 1995/96



Source: Eurydice.

Based on data contained in Table 40. In several countries the times are given in hours, weeks, years or as a proportion of the course. Conversions have been made, except where specific information has been provided, on the assumption that higher education years have 30 weeks, that school years have 200 days and that a school day has 5 teacher working hours.

Where information is not provided in the graph, decisions about the length of school placement are made by higher education institutions individually except in the case of **Italy** which has, as yet, no school placements in the professional training of secondary school teachers.

Figures for the **United Kingdom** are based on the consecutive type of training. See Table 40 for the concurrent type.

In **Germany** and **Austria**, for upper secondary (academic secondary) school teacher training, school placement occurs in both the first phase (together with general and other professional training) and in the second, school-based phase.

In **Denmark** (upper secondary) and **Luxembourg**, school placement is confined to the period of salaried traineeship. In **France** and **Austria** (upper secondary), 200 of the 240 days of placement occur during the period of salaried traineeship.

The preceding description has focused on differences between the forms of training in various countries and highlights that distinctions, where they exist, are greater between lower and upper secondary school teachers than between those in the same type of school. Moreover, a reasonable balance between general education, pedagogical studies and practical training is yet to be achieved in several countries. Resistance to both pedagogical study and practical training still remains in a number of countries where experience of both can be very limited, especially for those leaving traditional university courses. It has been recognised that the aim to create a common experience for pupils in secondary schools, both in countries with common schools and in those with diversified systems, may be more difficult to achieve where teachers have different levels of training and status.

It is not easy to identify general patterns in professional teacher training across countries. One major difference is the length of time between the beginning of professional training and final qualification which varies between six-and-a-half years for some in Germany and only six months for some in Denmark (and does not yet exist in Italy). Lengthy professional training, as in Germany, may be an ideal induction for future teachers, but financial and labour-market planning considerations (for both governments and individuals) may require the professional phase to be kept as short as possible and delayed until after general education is completed. In the latter case particularly, in-service teacher training becomes even more vital.

Table 40. The place of pedagogical and practical training, 1995/96

A. Lower Secondary General Education (Separate Route)

(All concurrent)

Country	General higher education (time, proportion)	Pedagogical study/educational theory/didactics (time, proportion)	School placement (time, proportion)	Total professional training (time, proportion)
B	14 to 20 hours a week. 60% of three years.	Pedagogy, psychology, general didactics and school placement (special didactics included in general education/subject studies).	16 to 28 weeks (11 to 16 of which in the 3rd year). 44 to 78% of professional training, 18 to 31% of total course.	5 to 9 hours a week. 40% of three years.
DK	65% of four years.	22% of total time. 63% of professional training time. Pedagogy, psychology and didactics. Special didactics included in general education/subject studies.	20 weeks. 37% of professional training, 13% of total course.	35% of four years.
D	74 to 81% of first phase of three-and-a-half to four-and-a-half years. Part of second, two-year practical phase.	Pedagogical studies. 18 to 26% of initial three-and-half to four-and-a-half-year course. Educational science in both initial and final phases. Includes psychology and educational theory, social sciences/politics or theology or philosophy, general didactics (subject didactics included in general education/subject studies).	Average of 12 weeks per year in blocks or spread across the course in the initial three-and-a-half to four-and-a-half-year phase (9 to 12% of total). Two-year school placement, including seminars (second phase). 31 to 36% of first phase, 40 to 48% of whole course.	27 to 38% of first phase. All of two- year practical training. 43 to 50% of both phases.
NL	Throughout the four years. Proportion decided locally.	Proportion decided locally.	Proportion decided locally.	Throughout the four years. Proportion decided locally.
A	40% of all three years of the course but integrated with professional areas.	Educational theory. Didactics and practical training are integrated with general education.	About 18% of the whole course.	60% of all three years of the course.
IS	67% of three-year course.	Educational studies. Psychology, philosophy, history, sociology of education. Didactics	14 weeks over three years. 47% of professional component, 16% of whole course.	33% of three-year course.
LI	45% of one-and-a half-year to three-year course.	35%. Pedagogy, developmental psychology, general and subject didactics.	20%. One week and 2 to 4 practice lessons or 2 to 3 weeks of placements per year.	55% of total course.
NO	67% of four-year course.	Local decision.	16 to 18 weeks. 76% of professional course, 25% of total course.	33% of four-year course.

Table 40. The place of pedagogical and practical training, 1995/96

B. Upper Secondary General Education (Separate Route)

Country	**General higher education (time, proportion)**	**Pedagogical study/educational theory/didactics (time, proportion)**	**School placement (time, proportion)**	**Total professional training (time, proportion)**
B (Consecutive)	Four or five years. 88 to 94%.	Experimental educational science, general methods of teaching. Subject didactics.	45 hours. 6% of one year, 1 to 2% of total course.	Some courses in one year. 6 to 12% of total course.
DK (Consecutive)	Five years. 91%.	Educational theory. Didactics. Two courses of 2 to 4 days. 10 to 20% of professional course.	Minimum of 120 hours' teaching and observation in six months in a school other than that in which employed over six months. 80 to 90% of professional course, 8% of total course.	9% of total course.
D (Concurrent)	91 to 94% of first four-and-a-half-year phase. Some also in the second practical phase.	Educational science in both initial and final phases. Includes psychology and educational theory, social sciences/politics or theology or philosophy, general didactics (subject didactics included in general education/subject studies). 6 to 9% of first phase of four-and-a-half years.	Average of 9 weeks per year in blocks or spread across the course in the initial four-and-a-half year phase (7% of total). Two years school placement (including seminars) (second phase). 31% of first phase, 38% of whole course.	13 to 17% of first phase. All of second phase. 42% of both phases.
NL[5] (Consecutive)	74% of total course. 93% of first four-year phase.	70% of professional year (600 out of 850 hours). 20% of total course.	30% of professional year in school placement (250 hours of which 120 to be spent on teaching). 6% of total course.	26% of total course. All of final one-year professional phase and two months of first phase.
A (Concurrent)	84% of the four-and-a-half- year university course is spent on general education and 69% of the total course including the practical year.	6% (including teaching practice) of the initial university-based phase is spent on pedagogy. 10% of time in the initial university phase is spent on didactics.	6% (including pedagogy) of the initial university-based phase and most of the traineeship year. About 23% of both phases.	16% of the four-and-a-half-year university course is spent on professional studies and 31% of the total course, including the practical year which is entirely professional.
IS (Consecutive)	75%. All in initial three-year course.	67% of professional course. General educational theory, psychology and sociology of education.	13% of professional course, 3% of total course.	25%. All of one-year professional course.
LI (Consecutive)	91 to 93%.	20% of professional course. School visits and didactics, youth psychology.	15% of professional courses. 4 weeks'observation and 4 weeks of practical training.	7 to 9% of total course, 35% of professional course.

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[5] Only the university postgraduate course.

Table 40. The place of pedagogical and practical training, 1995/96

C. General Education Lower and Upper Secondary (Common Route)

Country	General higher education (time, proportion)	Pedagogical study/educational theory/didactics (time, proportion)	School placement (time, proportion)	Total professional training (time, proportion)
D (Concurrent)	91% of first four-and-a-half-year phase. Some also in the second practical phase.	Educational science in both initial and final phases. Includes psychology and educational theory, social sciences/politics or theology or philosophy, general didactics (subject didactics included in general education/subject studies). 9% of first phase of four-and-a-half years.	Average of 9 weeks per year in blocks or spread across the course in the initial four-and-a-half-year phase (7% of total). Two years' school placement (including seminars) (second phase). 31% of first phase, 38% of whole course.	17% of first phase. All of second phase. 42% of both phases.
EL (Consecutive)	50 to 70% (local decision).	Local decision.	Local decision.	30 to 50% (local decision).
E (Consecutive)	80 to 86% of total course. All of initial four- to six-year phase.	75% of professional year, 40% on theoretical pedagogical elements (including psychological and sociological), 35% on educational aspects of teaching subjects. 11 to 15% of total course.	25% of professional year to be spent in school placement (15 credits of which at least ten are to be in actual teaching). 4 to 5% of total course.	14 to 20%. None of first phase. All of final year.
F (Consecutive)	60 to 75% of total course. All of first three or four years.	60 to 80% of professional course. 300 to 450 hours in two years on general pedagogy. 20 to 30% of professional phase. 400 to 750 hours on didactic of teaching subject. 40 to 50% of professional course.	Second year of professional course spent mainly in school and 20% of first year. 300 hours minimum (up to 60% of course time over two years). 20 to 24% of whole course.	25 to 40% of whole course. None of first three or four years. All of last two.
IRL (Consecutive)	75 to 80% of total course. All of first three to four-year phase. None of professional year.	Around 60 to 70% of professional year on foundations of education (philosophy, psychology, sociology, history of education, curriculum studies and comparative education) and on professional studies (didactics).	Minimum of 100 hours of teaching practice 30 to 40% of professional year in schools. 8 to 13% of whole course.	20 to 25% of total course. None of first phase, all of the last.
I (Consecutive)	Most of four to six years' general education course.	None. Questions on didactics in competitive entry examination to teaching posts *(abilitazione alla professione)*.	None.	No specialised and assessed professional course.
L (Consecutive)	57%. All of four-year first phase. None of last three year professional phase.	Less than 33% of professional course. Educational theory and didactic courses only in first year of this course.	Teaching practice over three years. Equivalent to one-and-a-half years of full-time teaching. 50% of professional course, 29% of total course.	43%. Whole of the three-year professional course.
P (Concurrent and consecutive)	Maximum 80% of the total course for upper secondary or 70% for lower secondary.	Local decision.	Local decision.	Not to fall below 20% of the total course for upper secondary or 30% for lower secondary.
FIN (Concurrent and consecutive)	78 to 81%. 125 to 145 credits out of a total of 160 to 180.	12% of total course. 65% of the professional element.	10% of total course. 35% of the professional element.	19 to 22%. 35 credits out of a total of 160 credits.
S (Concurrent and consecutive)	71% of four-and-a-half-year course.	Local decision.	Local decision.	22% of four-and-a-half-year course.
UK (Concurrent)[6]	75% of four-year course.	Separate area of course. Local decision on proportion (but mainly school-based).	32 weeks (80% of professional element). 20% total course.	25% of four-year course.
UK (including Scotland) (Consecutive)	75 to 80% All of three- or four-year course preceding professional year.	Separate area of course. Local decision on proportion (but mainly school-based).	24 weeks (67% of professional course). 22 weeks and 61% in Scotland. 12 to 17% of total course.	20 to 25%. All of professional year. None of preceding three or four years.
NO (Consecutive)	80 to 86%. Initial four- to six-year course.	Local decision.	12 to 14 weeks (33% of professional course). 5 to 7% of total course.	14 to 20%. One-year professional course.

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[6] In Scotland, the concurrent courses are taken generally by those wishing to teach in primary schools.

3. Importance of in-service teacher training

In-service training has several functions ranging from the personal development of individuals to collective projects aimed at improvements in the working practices of all teachers in one school. The way in-service teacher training is organised varies from one country to another.[7] It may be of short duration (from one day to one week), in which case it is frequently organised during school hours (Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg and Scotland). Where it is of longer duration (several weeks or even months), it normally takes place outside working hours and may take the form of courses leading to qualifications or even professional promotion (Spain and Scotland). In Portugal, where in-service training normally takes place out of school hours, this training time may be recuperated by time in lieu.

In most countries, participation in in-service training is not compulsory. The exceptions include Finland where teachers of general secondary education are required to participate in in-service training for a minimum of three days a year and teachers of vocational secondary education five days a year. Austrian law obliges all teachers to ensure that they constantly update their knowledge and the content of their teaching. In Austria, in-service training may therefore be considered as compulsory, even though no law or directive indicates the type or frequency of courses to be taken. In England and Wales, there are five days per year without pupil contact of which three should be given over to in-service training. In Scotland, in addition to five days of in-service training, there is a period of 50 hours of 'planned activities', part of which is intended for in-service training. In Iceland, contracts state that teachers should devote two weeks every other year to in-service training outside school sessions. In Sweden, each school is obliged to offer in-service training for, on average, 104 hours per teacher per year.

In many cases, teachers are allowed to enrol freely in the training of their choice. Sometimes they do so on the advice of an inspector and/or the school head. In France and Belgium (French Community), they have to obtain the approval of the school head before they are able to enrol in a training course. In Germany, where in-service teacher training is the responsibility of the *Länder* and comes under the Ministry of Education for each *Land*, a teacher wishing to take part in in-service training activities either enrols directly with the training institution, or enrolment takes place through the school head or the school inspector.

In general, training themes are proposed by organisations belonging to the Ministry of Education or by teachers' associations. In Denmark, training courses are organised in response to specific demands from school teaching staff. In Spain, the in-service training model is established on the basis of proposals submitted by the education administration and centres for teachers and teaching resources, as well as specific requests from teaching staff in schools.

In certain countries, participation in a training seminar may result in extra qualifications (Greece and Austria). In Italy, attendance at courses recognised and encouraged by competent authorities at different levels (national and local) leads to a salary increase. In Iceland, in-service training has an impact on the teacher's pay but not on career advancement. In Portugal, it is one of the prerequisites for career advancement, whereas in France it has no effect on advancement. It should be noted that, in Luxembourg, teachers receive remuneration if they choose to undergo training – during the school holidays – in what the Ministry deems to be priority areas.

In Greece, after teaching for two years (or three years if they wish to go abroad), teachers are entitled to a sabbatical year during which they receive their full salary, provided that this year is devoted to furthering their knowledge, pursuing university studies, carrying out a training placement abroad or conducting research work. In Iceland, teachers can apply after 10 years for paid leave for up to a year of in-service training

In Spain, taking part in in-service training activities has a specific impact on a teacher's professional career, either leading to higher marks in competitive and other examinations or, in the case of civil servant teachers who come under certain education administrations, as a prerequisite for receiving the *sexenios* (period of six years) payment forming an integral part of a specific salary increase. Furthermore, those with at least eight years of seniority may request time away from teaching in order to pursue studies that vary in length. During this period, they receive their full salary, except for certain supplements that are normally allocated for special duties.

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[7] For further details, see *In-Service Teacher Training of Teachers in the European Union and EFTA/EEA Countries.* (EURYDICE, 1995).

IV – Administration

Introduction

This section provides an overview of the way secondary education is administered in the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries. The administrative organisation and the main decision-making levels are analysed in order to bring out the specific national features and the main trends which appear.

The analysis deals with the following areas: organisation of schooling (duration of compulsory schooling, organisation of the school year, number of weekly teaching periods, number of pupils per class), content and distribution of teaching (general aims, curricula and programmes, course load, definition of recognised occupations, breakdown of practical and general training), pedagogical organisation and certification (teaching methods, selection and approval of school textbooks, certification and qualification) and management of teaching staff (recruitment, appraisal).

On the administrative side, it is not easy to define decision-making levels which correspond exactly to all national situations. Reference is usually made to four decision-making levels – central (which generally corresponds to the national level), regional, local and the school.

The **central** level is normally represented by the Ministry of Education. The ministry may appoint advisory bodies to assist it, such as the *Conseil National des Programmes* in France or the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) in Ireland, which draws up proposals for primary and secondary school curricula. In Austria, the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs is entirely responsible for general and vocational secondary education. But legislation and implementing powers are shared between the *Bund* and the *Länder*. In Finland, the National Board of Education, under the authority of the Ministry of Education, is responsible for defining and developing the national guidelines for curriculum design. In the United Kingdom, there are four ministerial authorities – the Department for Education and Employment for England, the Welsh Office Education Department for Wales, the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department and the Department of Education for Northern Ireland. In Iceland, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is responsible for upper secondary education.

In the case of Belgium, it is relevant to consider the ministries of the three Communities (French Community, Flemish Community and German-speaking Community) as the central level since the Federal government has transferred its responsibilities to them and they exercise important decision-making powers.

The **regional** level includes authorities with real decision-making powers, such as the Autonomous Communities in Spain which act within a decentralised organisational framework.[1] In Germany, the 16 *Länder* are constituent states of the Republic and as such enjoy governmental authority. State functions are divided between the Federation and the *Länder* and education is primarily the responsibility of the *Länder*. The regional level also includes administrative authorities which have delegated powers to carry out the tasks of the central authority at regional level and have rather limited decision-making powers, such as the *Direcções Regionais de Educação* in Portugal, the *Sovrintendenza scolastisca regionale* in Italy and the *Recteurs d'académie* in France. In Austria, separate federal bodies have been created to implement legislation in spheres where the *Bund* has administrative responsibilities. These are the district school boards *(Bezirksschulräte)* at the level of the political 'districts' and the provincial school boards *(Landesschulräte)* at the level of the *Länder*. In Norway, the regional level corresponds to the counties (which are responsible for providing upper secondary education).

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[1] In Spain, 7 of the 17 Autonomous Communities benefit from 'full powers' over education. The remaining Autonomous Communities will gain these powers under the present government, although the state will still retain certain powers such as decisions on the duration of education.

The **local** level essentially comprises district councils (Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and Norway) and sometimes authorities with powers which are defined apart from the usual geographical and administrative breakdown. In England and Wales, the authorities with responsibility for the education service in this area (local education authorities) are the county, district, borough or county borough councils. In Northern Ireland, the five Education and Library Boards have responsibility for the education service in a broad geographical area. The Scottish Local Authorities are responsible for education, along with other services, in Scotland. In Iceland, the local level corresponds to the municipalities (which are responsible for lower secondary education).

At **school** level, decisions are taken by various bodies. In general these include the school head, sometimes in collaboration with other bodies such as the pedagogical council. In the present study, when referring to the institutional level, no attempt has been made to take into consideration the respective prerogatives of the various boards and committees.[2]

Taking into account vocational secondary education entails the participation of other players since this type of training opens up on to the world of work. Consequently, the social partners – **employers' federations and trade unions** – are often involved in drafting legislation and regulations associated with the implementation and accreditation of training. **Individual companies** also intervene in the training process insofar as they select trainers for the practical part as well as the training methods they use.

The definition of vocational secondary education is difficult in some countries. In fact, we have to find a vocational type of education inside the education system. In the case of Germany, the presentation of vocational secondary education includes information on vocational training in full-time schools as well as the *duales System*, with two places of training, the *Berufsschule* and the firm. In the United Kingdom, vocational education mainly takes place in the Further Education (FE) institutions and therefore is not considered to be part of secondary education. However, in order to provide international comparisons, it may be included in upper secondary education. Concerning Liechtenstein, it should be noted that there is no vocational secondary education.

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[2] A more detailed approach is presented in *School Heads in the European Union* (EURYDICE, 1996).

1. Organisation

1.1. Duration of compulsory education

The duration of compulsory education corresponds to the period when pupils have to attend school or receive education. In most countries, the start of compulsory education coincides with the point of entry to primary school (except in Ireland, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) and the end coincides with the transition from lower to upper secondary education (except in France, Austria and the United Kingdom (England and Wales and Northern Ireland)). In Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands, the end of compulsory education can coincide with the end of upper secondary education, because compulsory education continues on a part-time basis during two or three years. Thus the end of full-time compulsory education is always within upper secondary education.

In all countries, decisions relating to the duration of compulsory education remain the sole prerogative of the central authority, with the exception of Germany where the individual *Länder* have this responsibility. However, in Belgium, where most powers are with the Communities, the federal government remains the competent authority for this matter.

Table 41. Duration of compulsory education, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B	▨☐						
DK	▨☐						
D		▨☐					
EL	▨☐						
E	▨☐						
F	▨☐						
IRL	▨☐						
I	▨☐						
L	▨☐						
NL	▨☐						
A	▨☐						
P	▨☐						
FIN	▨☐						
S	▨☐						
UK	▨☐						
IS	▨☐						
LI	▨						
NO	▨☐						

▨ General ☐ Vocational ▨☐ General and vocational

1.2. Organisation of the school year

Under organisation of the school year we include here its duration and the fixing of the dates of the different holidays. Decision-making in relation to the number of school days in the year always involves the central level. Decision-making relating to the dates of school holidays is also centralised in Belgium, at the level of the Communities,[3] and in France, where the Ministry of Education sets the dates for the beginning of the school year and school holidays in the various *académies* in three geographical groupings.

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[3] However, the breakdown of some free days is under the responsibility of the organising bodies or the schools.

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In some countries, there are national regulations which permit some regional modifications. In Germany, the dates for the start and end of the school year as well as the length of school holidays were standardised on the basis of an agreement between the *Länder* in 1964.[4] In Austria, the *Länder*, which have, as far as compulsory education is concerned, legislative competence in these matters, follow the federal provisions as specified in the law on school time *(Schulzeitgesetz)* for non-compulsory education. There may be variations in the fixing of the beginning and end of the school year. In Italy, the duration of the school year is decided at central level, but the beginning and the end of the school year are decided at regional level. In other countries, modifications are possible at the local or school level.

Table 42. Organisation of the school year, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B	▨□						
DK	▨□			▨□			
D		▨□					
EL	▨□						
E	▨□	▨□					
F	▨□						
IRL	▨□			▨□			□
I	▨□	▨□					
L	▨□				□	□	
NL	▨▨			▨□			
A	▨□	▨□					
P	▨▨			□			
FIN	▨□		▨□	▨□			
S	▨□		▨□	▨□			
UK	▨▨		▨▨	▨□			
IS	▨□						
LI	▨▨						
NO	▨□						

▨ General □ Vocational ▨□ General and vocational

In Denmark, with the exception of the first day of the summer holidays and the total number of school days (200) which are fixed by the Ministry of Education, the local education authorities are free to choose the holiday dates and shorter holiday periods. In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science decides the minimum number of school days/teaching periods per year, the number of days' holiday, and the length and dates of the summer holiday. The length and dates of the other holidays are decided at school level. In Sweden, the Education Act *(Skollagen)* sets the maximum duration of the school year. The municipalities (or the schools) are free to decide how to plan school time within the statutory framework of the school year.

In England and Wales, the minimum number of days on which the school meets is decided by law, but the dates of the school terms and holidays are decided by the local education authority (LEA) or the school governing body, depending on the type of school. The situation is similar in Scotland. In Northern Ireland, the dates of terms and holidays are set by the Education and Library Boards for controlled schools and in other cases by the relevant school authorities.

The organisation of the school year is managed in the same way in both general and technical education, except in Portugal (school level). The role of social partners is mentioned by Ireland (firms) and Luxembourg (employers' federations and trade unions). In Germany, the framework programme of vocational courses is regulated in terms of the number of hours to be devoted to vocational training throughout the whole of training. Participants in the dual system (training in the company) have 25 to 30 days' leave each year, depending on their age.

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[4] According to this agreement, the summer holidays (of about six weeks) in the individual *Länder* are staggered over the period between the end of June and mid-September. The actual dates are fixed in a long-term agreement by the Standing Conference of the Ministers for Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder*. Consequently, the actual beginning and end of the school year vary in the *Länder*.

1.3. Number of weekly taught periods

In some countries (Belgium, Spain, France and Finland), the weekly teaching time is fixed by a minimum and maximum number of taught periods. Thus there is both a central framework and room for manoeuvre at the level of the schools, which may concern more particularly the upper secondary level, as in Portugal and Norway. (For more details, see Chapter II of this study.) In the Netherlands, the central level sets the weekly number of periods for lower secondary education.

In Austria, secondary schools which choose to make use of curricular autonomy enjoy a certain amount of flexibility while the others apply a centrally fixed number of weekly taught periods.

Table 43. Number of weekly taught periods, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B	▨☐		▨☐	▨☐			
DK	☐			▨☐			☐
D		▨☐					
EL	▨☐						
E	▨☐	▨☐		▨☐			
F	▨☐			▨☐			☐
IRL	▨☐						☐
I	▨☐						
L	▨☐			☐	☐	☐	
NL	▨☐			▨☐			
A	▨☐			▨☐			
P	▨			▨☐			
FIN	▨☐		▨☐	▨☐			
S			▨☐	▨☐			
UK				▨			
IS	▨☐		▨	▨☐			
LI	▨						
NO	▨☐			▨☐	☐	☐	☐

▨ General ☐ Vocational ▨☐ General and vocational

In Germany, the weekly taught periods for the different types of school are laid down by the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder*. In some *Länder*, the Ministry has introduced a five-day week for all schools.

In Greece, Italy, Ireland and Luxembourg, the number of weekly taught periods is fixed at central level for the whole of general secondary education.

However, in three countries (Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom), there is no minimum or maximum fixed at the central or regional level.

For vocational education, the decision-making level for the definition of the weekly schedule is different from that which applies in general education in Denmark (the central authority fixes 37 hours per week during the practical training period), Luxembourg (schools have flexibility between 32 and 36 periods a week in technical education) and Portugal (where school time is fully the responsibility of the vocational schools, except for those schools which provide mainstream education). Representatives from the world of employment participate in decision-making in Denmark, France, Ireland, Luxembourg and Norway.

1.4. Number of pupils per class

Decisions about the number of pupils in each class are more often the province of the national or regional supervisory authorities than of the school itself. In fact, most countries have fixed some norms (minimum and/or maximum).

Table 44. Number of pupils per class, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B				▨☐			
DK	▨☐			▨☐			
D		▨☐					
EL	▨☐						
E	▨☐						
F				▨☐			
IRL	▨☐						
I	▨☐						
L	▨☐				☐	☐	
NL				▨☐			
A	▨☐	▨☐					
P	▨☐			☐			
FIN			▨☐	▨☐			
S			▨☐	▨☐			
UK (E,W,NI)			▨☐				
UK (SC)	▨☐						
IS	▨☐		▨	▨☐			
LI	▨						
NO	▨☐						

▨ General ☐ Vocational ▨☐ General and vocational

In Germany, the norms fixed for the minimum and maximum number of pupils per class are defined by the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* with respect to the different kinds of schools and school years. Within these norms, each school decides the composition of classes, and thence the grouping or the division of the classes. In Italy, the number of pupils in each class must range between 15 and 28 for the *scuola media*, and between 20 and 30 for the *liceo* (except during the first year, where there must be between 25 and 30 pupils). In Austria, the law stipulates a range of pupils per class (between 20 and 30).

In other countries, the Ministry of Education only sets the maximum number of pupils per class. This is the case in particular in Denmark for the *folkeskole* (at upper secondary school, it is decided at school level), in Greece and in Spain (no more than 30 pupils per class in lower secondary and vocational education, and in upper secondary education no more than 35). In Scotland, the recommended maximum number of pupils in a primary school class is 33, and fewer in secondary schools and for practical subjects.

In Iceland, decisions on the number of pupils per class are taken at local level in lower secondary education (since 1 August 1996). In upper secondary education, the schools themselves have some scope for deciding the number of pupils in each class, although the general frame is decided centrally.

However, the initiative is left with schools to organise the distribution of the pupils among the classes in Belgium, France and the Netherlands. In the United Kingdom (except Scotland), there are no recommendations for maximum or minimum numbers of pupils per class. This is also the case in Finland and Sweden, with a possibility of control by the municipalities.

With respect to vocational education, Luxembourg emphasises the role of the employers' federations and trade unions. In Portugal, the number of pupils per class is set according to a minimum determined by the central authority during the first years of operation.

2. Content and distribution of teaching

2.1. General guidelines

The main guidelines and objectives for general secondary education are always the province of the central authorities (or the *Länder* in Germany). Thus in Denmark, the major aspects of the education system are governed by laws passed by the Danish Parliament (the *Folketing*) which establish overall objectives and define a general framework for the various types of education.

Table 45. General guidelines, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B	▨☐						
DK	▨☐						
D	☐	▨☐			☐	☐	
EL	▨☐				☐	☐	
E	▨☐	▨☐					
F	▨☐	☐			☐	☐	
IRL	▨☐				☐	☐	
I	▨☐						
L	▨☐				☐	☐	
NL	▨☐						
A	▨☐						
P	▨☐						
FIN	▨☐				☐	☐	
S	▨☐						
UK	▨☐						
IS	▨☐				☐	☐	
LI	▨						
NO	▨☐						

▨ General ☐ Vocational ▨☐ General and vocational

With respect to vocational education, France is characterised by regional decision-making. In seven countries (Germany, Greece, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Finland and Iceland), employers' federations and trade unions are also involved in defining the general aims. In Germany, the framework programmes *(Rahmenlehrpläne)* for vocational instruction in *Berufsschulen* are worked out jointly in a coordinated procedure by central and regional authorities on the basis of regulations governing on-the-job training. In Ireland, there is a well-defined link between the central level and the business sector at local level. The law provides for the intervention of Vocational Education Committees under the authority of the Ministry of Education. In Luxembourg, the social partners are consulted on all legislation relating to technical secondary education, apprenticeships and other types of vocational training.

2.2. Curricula and programmes

The central level intervenes to varying degrees to determine curricula and programmes in all the countries. In many countries, a core curriculum or a general framework is defined at the central level from which local authorities and schools develop their own curricula.

This is, for instance, the case in Denmark (where the municipalities decide themselves whether they want to follow the centrally constructed curriculum guidelines), in the Netherlands (where, although a core curriculum has been introduced for the first three years of secondary education, schools are free to choose their own school curriculum), in Finland (where the National Board of Education defines the general framework of the curriculum for the *peruskoulu* and the *lukio)*, in Sweden (where the government defines minima) and in Iceland (where the content of education is defined in the National Curriculum guidelines).

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the government defines the basic curriculum which must include the National Curriculum (in England and Wales) or the Northern Ireland Curriculum (in Northern Ireland). Bodies at local and school level determine their own curriculum policy to reflect their particular needs and circumstances. The policy must fit in with the National Curriculum or the Northern Ireland Curriculum. In Scotland, the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum is in charge of curricular development, with the Scottish Office devising guidelines for curriculum and assessment. These guidelines are interpreted at local and school level to meet local needs.

Table 46. Curricula and programmes, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B	▨☐			▨	☐	☐	
DK	▨☐		▨☐	▨☐	☐	☐	☐
D	☐	▨☐			☐ (*)	☐ (*)	
EL	▨☐					☐	
E	▨☐	▨☐		▨☐	☐	☐	
F	▨☐	☐		☐	☐	☐	
IRL	▨☐			▨	☐	☐	
I	▨☐			☐			
L	▨☐				☐		
NL	▨			▨☐			
A	▨☐			▨☐	☐	☐	
P	▨☐			☐			
FIN	▨☐		▨☐	▨☐	☐	☐	☐
S	▨☐		▨☐	▨☐			
UK (E, W, NI)	▨☐		▨☐	▨☐	☐	☐	☐
UK (SC)	▨		▨☐	▨☐	☐	☐	☐
IS	▨☐			▨☐	☐	☐	
LI	▨						
NO	▨☐						

▨ General ☐ Vocational ▨☐ General and vocational

(*) represents the role played by employers and trade unions in the *duales System*.

In Germany, the curricula are under the responsibility of the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* and are published as regulations; as such, they take the form of instructions from a higher authority which are binding on teachers.

In Spain, the regional educational administrations (Autonomous Community or region administered directly by the Ministry of Education and Culture) are allowed to adapt curricula to their own specific requirements, provided they respect the core curriculum established by the Ministry. Optional subject matters are not regulated on a nation-wide basis. They are established by the competent education authority in each regional area and by the schools themselves, subject to certain rules.

In some countries, local authorities or schools are given considerable room for manoeuvre. In Belgium, programmes are set by the Ministry for the French Community schools. In the other networks, schools can adopt the official programmes or define their own programmes, which must however be approved by the Ministry.

With regard to vocational education, in relation to the drafting of curricula and programmes, the participation of the business sector is relatively frequent. The employers' federations (Belgium,[5] Denmark, Germany, Spain, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Austria, Finland, United Kingdom and Iceland), trade unions (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Austria, Finland, United Kingdom except Scotland, and Iceland) and companies (Denmark, United Kingdom except Scotland) help to define programmes.

In Belgium (French Community), the Community Commission on qualifications and profiles, on which are represented teachers, employers and trade unions, defines the professional profiles and the training programmes for various occupations. However, all the programmes must be approved by the Minister. In the Flemish Community, the Social and Economic Council (SERV) defines the professional profiles. The Flemish Council for Education (VLOR) then defines the training programmes.

In Denmark, the social partners are responsible for updating training programmes as well as for the practical side of training courses. They also exercise considerable influence over the classroom element of training courses.

In Germany, training regulations for vocational training within the dual system are issued at the Federal level.

In Spain, the various vocational training programmes are established by the state in association with employers' and workers' organisations.

In France, the vocational upper secondary school leaving certificates *(baccalauréats professionnels)* were created in close collaboration with the business sector.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) has overall responsibility for vocational education and training qualifications. Vocational education usually leads to General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) (broad-based vocational qualifications), National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) (job-specific qualifications) and other more traditional qualifications such as BTEC. Approved centres deliver GNVQs and NVQs by structuring their own programmes to meet specified criteria provided by the 'awarding body' (the independent organisation which awards qualifications). In the case of NVQs, awarding bodies work with Lead Bodies, which include employer and trade union representatives. In Scotland, SCOTVEC awards are SVQs (Scottish Vocational Qualifications) and GSVQs (General Scottish Vocational Qualifications). These are equivalent to NVQs and are similarly based.

2.3. Course load

The course load, meaning the number of hours required to deliver the curriculum, is generally defined together with the methods for developing curricula. In countries where it is the central authorities which determine course load, they also prescribe development methods, as in Greece, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal and Norway. In Germany, the *Länder* determine the number of teaching hours for each subject.

In general secondary education, many countries decide, at the central level, the minimum and maximum number of hours to be devoted to the compulsory subjects. This is the case in Belgium (French Community) with the drawing up of timetables, Spain (where the programme established by the various administrations with full powers over education has in all cases to include the core curriculum fixed by the Ministry), the Netherlands (where the minimum number of lessons per school year is determined at central level for the first three school years of lower secondary education but the allocation of the number of lessons by subject is determined, however, at school level), Austria (where schools are free to make certain modifications to curricula and timetables in compliance with the law) and Finland (where the Council of State decides the minimum number of hours in compulsory subjects in general education and in common subjects in vocational education). Definition of minimum course loads is also the norm in Denmark and since 1995/96 in Sweden.

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[5] In the Flemish Community, schools cooperate with employers for the preparation of curricula and programmes.

Table 47. Course load, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B	▨☐						
DK	▨☐		▨	▨			
D		▨☐					
EL	▨☐						
E	▨☐	▨☐					
F	▨☐						
IRL	☐			▨			
I	▨☐			☐			
L	▨☐				☐	☐	
NL	▨☐			▨			
A	▨☐			▨☐			
P	▨☐			▨☐			
FIN	▨☐		▨☐	▨☐			
S	▨☐		▨☐	▨☐			
UK				▨☐	☐	☐	
IS	▨☐						
LI	▨						
NO	▨☐						

▨ General ☐ Vocational ▨☐ General and vocational

In England and Wales, the amount of time to be spent on each subject can not be prescribed. Instead, there is an obligation on school governing bodies and headteachers to ensure that there is sufficient time to deliver the National Curriculum, religious education, collective worship and sex education.

With regard to vocational education, a clear distinction between general and technical education is made only in Ireland. (It is the central level which fixes the course load, while schools are free to do this in general education.) In Luxembourg, the employers' federations and the trade unions play an important role. In the United Kingdom, the regulatory and awarding bodies may indicate how many hours of study a qualification is likely to take to complete, but this is ultimately determined by the institution providing the course.

2.4. Definition of recognised occupations

The definition of recognised occupations to be catered for by vocational education is frequently the subject of negotiations between the state and the social partners. It is the case in Denmark, where the social partners, through their representation in the trade committees, are involved in the decision-making regarding the duration and nature of the courses, Luxembourg, where the Ministry of Education, in agreement with the chambers of trade, determines which occupations are subject to apprenticeship, Norway, and Germany where, on the basis of consultation with all those responsible for vocational training and with the involvement of employers and trade unions, training regulations are drawn up which establish around 370 recognised occupations.[6] In Spain and France, training programmes are prepared at national level in *ad hoc* committees such as the *Consejo General de la Formación Profesional* in Spain, a council of representatives from employers' and trade union organisations and the state.

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[6] According to the *Rahmenlehrplan*, the *Berufsschule* classes cover the material for each recognised occupation.

Table 48. Definition of recognised occupations, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B	▭						
DK	▭				▭	▭	▭
D	▭	▭			(*)	(*)	
EL	▭						
E	▭						
F	▭				▭	▭	
IRL	▭				▭	▭	
I	▭						
L	▭				▭	▭	
NL	▭			▭	▭	▭	
A	▭				▭	▭	
P	▭						
FIN	▭				▭	▭	
S	▭						
UK	▭				▭	▭	▭
IS	▭				▭	▭	
LI	▭				▭	▭	
NO	▭				▭	▭	
	▭ Vocational						

(*) as far as training in the *duales System* is concerned.

In Belgium, the Ministry responsible for small and medium-sized businesses requires a certificate of vocational qualification and a certificate of management knowledge for entry to a regulated occupation.

In Italy, occupational profiles and subject areas common to all sections are defined by ministerial decree.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, industry lead bodies in consultation with the awarding bodies and the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) decide which vocational qualifications are appropriate for specific industries. All National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) must be accredited by the NCVQ.

2.5. Breakdown of practical and general education in vocational education

The breakdown between general and vocational training is most often determined at central level. In Germany, under the dual system, framework programmes for vocationally-oriented courses offered by the *Berufsschule* are prepared jointly by the federal authorities and the *Länder* in consultation with employers and trade unions. Work-based vocational training has been standardised at federal level. In Iceland, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture decides on both the theoretical and the practical aspects of training, but the vocational education committees are consulted on those matters.

Table 49. Breakdown between practical and general training, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B	☐						
DK	☐						
D	☐	☐			☐ (*)	☐ (*)	
EL	☐						
E	☐	☐					
F	☐				☐	☐	
IRL	☐						
I	☐			☐			
L	☐				☐	☐	
NL	☐			☐	☐	☐	
A	☐				☐	☐	
P	☐						
FIN	☐			☐	☐	☐	
S	☐			☐	☐	☐	
UK	☐			☐	☐	☐ (except SC)	☐ (except SC)
IS	☐				☐	☐	
LI	☐						
NO	☐						

☐ Vocational

(*) as far as training in the *duales System* is concerned.

In Finland, the minimum amount of practical training is defined on central level. It can be increased at school level.

In Sweden, the national goals in the 16 programmes of the vocational upper secondary school are decided in cooperation with the social partners involved in each programme. There are programme advisory groups for each national programme. Each school cooperates with the social partners and local industry, but there are no regulations concerning the form of the cooperation.

In the United Kingdom, the degree of practical training and related theory is decided at institutional level to meet general criteria laid down by the awarding body.

3. Pedagogical arrangements and certification

3.1. Teaching methods

Teaching methods are chosen at the local or the school level in seven countries (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, United Kingdom, Iceland and Norway). Thus in Belgium, each organising authority is free to choose its own teaching methods. In Denmark, the municipal councils are allowed to intervene in the teaching activities of public schools, whilst private schools are considered a part of alternative education.

In other countries, this choice is made jointly with the central or the regional level. The cases of France and Luxembourg serve to illustrate the use of the school development plan. This defines the school's own specific objectives with regard to educational initiatives and action, as well as extra-curricular activities, although the plan must be endorsed by a higher authority (the *rectorat* in France). In Italy, the regional institutes for research, educational innovation and teacher retraining (IRRSAE) which come under the Ministry of Education, though broadly autonomous, can monitor pilot projects proposed by the schools. In Portugal, broad methodological guidelines are drawn up at central level, although in each school it is the Pedagogical Council which defines precisely the methodology to be used.

Table 50. Teaching methods, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B				▨☐		☐	☐
DK			▨☐	▨☐			
D		▨☐			☐	☐	
EL	▨☐						
E	▨☐	▨☐		▨☐			☐
F		▨		▨☐			☐
IRL	▨☐			▨			
I	▨☐			▨☐			
L	▨☐			▨	☐	☐	
NL	▨			▨☐			
A	▨☐			▨☐			
P	▨☐			▨☐			☐
FIN				▨☐			
S				▨☐			
UK				▨☐			
IS				▨☐			
LI	▨						
NO				▨☐			

▨ General ☐ Vocational ▨☐ General and vocational

In three countries (Germany, Greece, Liechtenstein), the central or regional level defines the teaching methods. In Germany, teaching in schools is governed by regulations of various kinds laid down by the *Länder*. The curricula include teaching guidelines on the treatment of the various subjects, distribution of materials and various didactic approaches. In Greece, at the beginning of the school year, special directions about general and particular teaching methods are sent to all teachers by the National Pedagogical Institute.

With regard to vocational education, Luxembourg gives a consultative role to the employers' organisations and trade unions. In Portugal, the centrally prepared curriculum is proposed to schools which have autonomous management of the pedagogical and methodological guidelines. Firms are associated with decisions concerning vocational secondary education in Belgium, Spain, France and Portugal. In Germany, the *Rahmenlehrpläne* for vocational instruction in *Berufsschulen* are worked out jointly in a coordinated procedure by central and regional authorities, in which employers' associations and trade unions are involved.

3.2. Selection and approval of school textbooks

The selection of school textbooks most frequently takes place at school level (or even at section or class level). This free choice exists in Belgium, Denmark, where the general responsibility for school textbooks falls to the school's *skolebestyrelse*, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal, while taking into account general recommendations expressed by the competent central departments, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom where no textbooks are compulsory for secondary school pupils, with the exception of literature texts specified as part of the examination syllabus.

Table 51. Selection and approval of school textbooks, 1995/96

	Decision-making level			
	Central	Regional	Local	School
B				▨
DK				▨
D		▨		▨
EL	▨			
E		▨		▨
F				▨
IRL				▨
I				▨
L	▨			
NL				▨
A	▨			▨
P				▨
FIN				▨
S				▨
UK				▨
IS	▨			▨
LI	▨			
NO	▨			▨

▨ General

However, sometimes the selection is made from a list approved at a higher level, such as the *Land* in Germany, the Autonomous Community in Spain and the Ministries of Education in Norway and Austria.

In Iceland, at lower secondary level, the state is responsible for supplying textbooks and teaching materials, but the schools are free to choose what materials they prefer to use, when there is a choice. At upper secondary level, schools are free to choose textbooks and teaching materials.

Only in Greece and Luxembourg are school textbooks selected at central level.

3.3. Certification and qualification

The determination of certification and qualification procedures is very often under the responsibility of the central level. It also depends on the teaching level (upper or lower secondary). We will focus here on certification at the end of upper secondary level (see Chapter II).

In general secondary education, there is a national examination, always organised under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, in the Netherlands (at the end of VBO, MAVO, HAVO and VWO), in Finland (matriculation examination assessed at national level by a committee appointed by the Ministry of Education) and in Portugal (since 1995).

But the state can sometimes grant schools an important role, for instance by making them responsible for issuing school-leaving certificates themselves, although they are required to apply standards which to a greater or lesser degree are imposed and verified by the education authority, as is the case in Belgium, where schools at all levels are authorised to issue diplomas and certificates,[7] Greece, Spain and Iceland. In Sweden, national tests designed by the National Agency for Education are used in the ninth year of the *grundskola* as a base to facilitate the establishment of comparable criteria in the marks which are given to the pupils. Similar tests are recommended, but not compulsory, at upper secondary level.

Table 52. Certification and qualification, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B				▨☐			
DK	▨☐						
D		▨☐		▨☐	☐ (*)		☐ (*)
EL				▨☐			
E				▨☐			
F	▨☐						
IRL	▨☐						
I	▨☐			▨☐			
L	▨☐				☐	☐	
NL	▨			▨☐			
A	▨☐	▨☐		▨☐	☐	☐	
P	▨☐						
FIN	▨☐						
S				▨☐			
UK	▨☐				☐	☐	☐
IS	☐			▨☐	☐	☐	
LI	▨						
NO	▨☐						

▨ General ☐ Vocational ▨☐ General and vocational

(*) as far as certification and qualification in the *duales System* is concerned.

In vocational education, Luxembourg, Austria, the United Kingdom and Iceland involve employers' federations and trade unions in the decision-making process relating to vocational certification and qualifications. In Germany, trainees in the dual system take final examinations administered by the authorities responsible for vocational training (self-governing regional and sectoral organisations from the various branches of industry and commerce).[8] In Iceland, the journeyman's examination is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and of a special committee comprised of representatives from both sides of industry.

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[7] But the upper secondary level certificate must be approved by an *ad hoc* committee. Diplomas and certificates may also be issued by Community examining boards.

[8] The boards of examination are made up of representatives of industry and labour and teachers at *Berufsschulen*. Concomitantly, the *Berufsschule* issues a leaving certificate, which may incorporate a *Hauptschulabschluß* or *Realschulabschluß*, depending on the candidate's achievement.

4. Management of teaching staff

4.1. Recruitment

Teaching staff are recruited only at central level in Greece, France, Italy and Luxembourg. In Portugal, the recruitment of teaching staff is mainly the responsibility of the central authority with, however, an opportunity of recruitment at the local level. The recruitment is organised through a competitive examination at the municipal or inter-municipal level.

In other countries, the lower levels of decision-taking are involved, sometimes at one level of secondary education (either lower or upper, the other one remaining under the responsibility of the state).

- Recruitment takes place on a regional basis in Spain, (in public schools), in Austria, (teachers for *Hauptschulen* and *Berufsschulen)*, at the level of the counties in Denmark and Norway (in upper secondary level) and at the level of the *Länder* in Germany.
- Recruitment is carried out by the municipalities or other local authorities or by the schools in Ireland, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom, and in Iceland at the lower secondary education level.

Table 53. Recruitment of teaching staff, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B	▨☐		▨☐	▨☐			
DK		▨▨	▨▨	☐☐			
D		▨☐					
EL	▨☐						
E		▨☐		▨☐			
F	▨☐						☐
IRL				▨☐			☐
I	▨☐						
L	▨☐						
NL			▨☐	▨☐			☐
A	▨☐	▨☐					
P	▨▨		▨▨	☐☐			
FIN			▨☐	▨☐			
S			▨☐	▨☐			
UK (E,W/NI)				▨☐			
UK (SC)			▨▨	▨▨			
IS	▨☐		▨▨	▨☐			
LI	▨▨						
NO		▨☐	▨▨				

▨ General ☐ Vocational ▨☐ General and vocational

In England and Wales, following the Education Reform Act 1988, responsibility for appointing and dismissing teaching staff was effectively transferred from the LEA to the governing bodies[9] even though, for most schools maintained by the LEA, staff remain legally in the employment of the LEA. In Scotland, school boards now share powers to recruit teaching staff jointly with the local authorities.

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[9] For a detailed account of the role of governing bodies and school boards, please see the document *School Heads in the European Union* (EURYDICE, 1996).

In Belgium, the recruitment of teaching staff is the responsibility of each organising authority. In the schools of the French Community network, recruitment is undertaken at the central level while in the schools of the other networks, it takes place at the local level (provincial and municipal schools) and at the level of the organising authority of the school or of all the schools which depend on it (private non-state schools).

Teaching staff working in vocational education are not recruited at the same level of decision taking as in general education in Portugal (school level) and Norway (regional level). Companies are involved in recruitment decisions in France, Ireland and the Netherlands. In general, trainers are recruited and appraised at local level, represented by the educational institution as far as general trainers are concerned, and by the company with respect to its own salaried training staff.

4.2. Assessment of teachers' work

The assessment of teachers' work is always under the responsibility of the inspectors in the countries where there is an inspectorate. In other countries, it is more difficult to define the same kind of activities, as the monitoring of teaching is organised on a broader basis: educational activities are assessed without referring to an appraisal of individual teachers' work.

Where it exists, inspection is generally organised at central level. This is the case, for example, in Belgium, with the inspectors of the Community, and in Italy, where the Inspectorate help the *provveditore agli studi* to monitor schools in the province. In Austria, inspection is under the responsibility of the federal school authorities in the *Länder* and the districts. In Luxembourg, the Ministry of Education is also responsible for monitoring secondary education through the heads of the various schools.

Table 54. Assessment of teachers' work, 1995/96

	Decision-making level				Input of social partners		
	Central	Regional	Local	School	Employers' federations	Trade unions	Companies
B	▨☐		☐				
DK	☐	▨	▨		☐	☐	
D		▨☐	▨	☐			
EL		▨☐					
E	▨☐	▨☐					
F	▨						☐
IRL	▨☐						
I	▨☐		▨☐				
L	▨☐						
NL	▨☐	☐					
A		▨☐					
P				▨☐			
FIN		▨☐	▨☐	▨☐			
S	▨☐		▨☐	▨☐			
UK (E,W,NI)				▨☐			
UK (SC)	▨☐			▨☐			
IS	▨☐						
LI	▨						
NO		▨☐	▨	▨☐			

▨ General ☐ Vocational ▨☐ General and vocational

In most of the German *Länder*, school supervisory authorities exercise academic supervision *(Fachaufsicht)*, legal supervision *(Rechtsaufsicht)* and staff supervision *(Dienstaufsicht)* of teachers and headteachers in public-sector schools, in order to ensure that teaching staff are carrying out their duties.

In some countries, there is an inspection at the central level but the appraisal of teachers' work is under the responsibility of the schools. This is the case in Portugal, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In Scotland, inspection is the responsibility of the central level but senior management in schools takes part in the assessment or appraisal of staff internally.

In other countries, there is no inspectorate as such. National monitoring of the education system is at the discretion of the Ministry of Education in Iceland. It is mainly the regional authorities (prefectures in Greece, counties in Denmark and Norway) and the municipalities (for example, in Finland and Sweden) which are obliged to monitor and evaluate the educational activities systematically in relation to the objectives and conditions applying to them.

With regard to vocational education, Denmark demonstrates the role of the employers' federations and trade unions. In Portugal, the regional delegations of the general inspection of education are in charge of educational assessment and monitoring in the vocational schools, but these delegations represent the central government. In Scotland, Further Education Colleges are subject to national inspection and are responsible for educational assessment, monitoring and recruiting.

5. Summary

This analysis has brought out a certain number of trends in the administration of secondary education in the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries. It appears that, while the degrees of centralisation or decentralisation vary from one country to another, they also vary from one field to another. Comparison of general and vocational education makes it possible to assess the differences in organisation and more particularly the involvement of both sides of industry in decisions on the administration of the vocational streams.

Generally speaking, while all the Member States have in common the characteristic of having made a start on decentralisation, it appears that this is more often in the form of a sharing of responsibilities than of a clear transfer of powers and decisions. On the first point, it would appear that the central authority is the administrative reference level in a majority of countries (Belgium,[10] Greece, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway). This does not mean that the other administrative levels are not, in certain cases, associated with decision taking. Mention can for instance be made of the role played by the regional authority (France and Italy), the local authority (Belgium, Italy, Iceland and Norway) and the school (Belgium and Portugal). The regional level is predominant in Germany, where the *Länder* are responsible for general and vocational education in schools, and increasingly so in Spain (the Autonomous Communities), while in Austria it intervenes jointly with the central authority. This concept of decision taking jointly or in association is also characteristic of Denmark and the Netherlands at central, local and school level. This trend towards joint decision taking brings these Member States closer to those in which decisions are taken largely at local or school level (Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom).

With regard to the various aspects examined in this chapter, the distinction between totally decentralised types of decision taking and others which are totally centralised must be qualified. Only the definition of the duration of compulsory education remains the exclusive prerogative of the central level (of the *Länder* in Germany). In vocational education, the definition of recognised occupations and the division between practical and general education are also very centralised. To a lesser extent, the general aims of education are mainly defined at central level, which also influences the organisation of the school year, curricula and course loads. The role played by local authorities and schools is particularly evident in relation to the choice of teaching methods, text books and the use of school time. Some aspects (recruitment of teachers and appraisal of their work, certification and qualification procedures, and class sizes) are typically subject to decision taking which is very much divided over the various administrative levels.

As regards vocational education, the administrative reference level is often the same as in general education. The most notable exceptions are, for example, the organisation of the school year in Portugal, the number of weekly teaching periods in Denmark and Luxembourg, the general aims in Germany (as far as training in the dual system is concerned), the curricula in France, Italy and Portugal, course loads in Ireland, certification and qualification procedures in Iceland, the recruitment of teachers in Denmark and the appraisal of teacher performance in the Netherlands. The role of representatives of workers and employers is more especially brought out in relation to the content and division of education (general aims, curricula, definition of recognised occupations and division between practical and general education).

The different types of administration of secondary education are in practice largely determined by the more general political, historical and structural context. In Member States with a federal or quasi-federal structure (for instance, Belgium, Germany and Spain), it is the first intermediate level[11] (regional or community) that has most powers. In the northern European countries and in the United Kingdom, local authorities traditionally have important powers. In the remaining countries, reference to a central authority is more or less the starting point, in the knowledge that various powers are delegated to lower administrative levels. While the principle of subsidiarity may to some extent inform this movement towards partial decentralisation, there are also structural reasons inherent in the education system itself: upper secondary schools often serve a wider public at regional level, while lower secondary schools (particularly if they are linked to primary education as in the all-through, single-structure schools) are provided at local level. The question of decentralisation is inevitably linked with that of school autonomy. The advantages and disadvantages which result from this have been the subject of much debate which it would be well to illuminate by producing some tangible results on the point.

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[10] The Community being taken as the central level.

[11] In Germany, the *Länder* are the highest level of competence in the field of education.

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EURYDICE

The Information Network on Education in Europe

OBJECTIVES

The role of the EURYDICE network, the information network on education in Europe, is to promote the exchange of information on education systems and on national policies in the field of education. It contributes to increasing mutual understanding and cooperation between the 15 Member States of the European Union[1].

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

In 1976, when the Council and the Education Ministers adopted the Resolution on a first programme for cooperation in the field of education, they gave recognition to the importance, in this context, of exchanges of information and experience. It was on this basis that the EURYDICE network was set up and became operational in 1980. Ten years later, in 1990, the Council and the Ministers adopted a Resolution dealing specifically with EURYDICE and calling for a reinforcement of its services. The Maastricht Treaty (Treaty on European Union) marked an important step forward, providing in the new Chapter 3, Article 126, for developing exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the education systems of the Member States. It has thus opened up for EURYDICE new prospects of which the Community education programme, SOCRATES, adopted on 14 March 1995, takes full account (Annex, Chapter III, Action 3, point 2). It is under this Programme that the development of EURYDICE will be assured from now on.

ORGANISATION AND ACTIVITIES

The network comprises **National Units**, most of which are located in the Ministries of Education[1]. The **European Unit**, established by the European Commission, coordinates the network's activities, publications and services. It also promotes exchanges between the National Units to meet the information needs of national and Community policymakers. On the basis of contributions from the network, it produces basic documents and comparative analyses on topics of interest to cooperation at Community level. EURYDICE is also increasingly called upon to fulfil the role of an 'Observatory', in relation to the development of the education systems and policies in the European Union. Through the dissemination of its publications, the EURYDICE network also reaches a wide public in the education world.

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- Database on the education systems (EURYBASE).
- Various publications on education.

EURYDICE European Unit
Rue d'Arlon 15
B-1050 BRUSSELS
Tel. 32 2 238.30.11
Fax 32 2 230.65.62

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[1] Under the Agreement on the European Economic Area, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein are participating in the activities of the EURYDICE network in the same way as the Member States of the European Union. Moreover, from 1996, the network activities are open to the central and eastern European countries and to Cyprus.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

EURYDICE NETWORK

Editing of the document
Eurydice European Unit
Rue d'Arlon 15
B-1050 Brussels
Tel.: 32-2-238.30.11
Fax: 32-2-230.65.62
E-mail: EURYDICE.UEE@euronet.be
Coordination and completion of the study: Arlette Delhaxhe, Martin McLean, Azzedine Si Moussa

Data provided by the Eurydice National Units

EURYDICE NETWORK UNITS

European Union

BELGIQUE / BELGIE
Unité Belge d'Eurydice (Communauté française)
Ministère de l'Éducation, de la Recherche et de la Formation
Secrétariat Général
Cité Administrative de l'État
Boulevard Pachéco 19, Bte 0, 7e étage
B-1010 Bruxelles
Tel.: 32-2-210.55.29
Telefax: 32-2-210.55.38
National contribution: joint responsibility

Belgische Eurydice-Eenheid (Vlaamse Gemeenschap)
Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap
Departement Onderwijs
Afdeling Beleidsgerichte Coördinatie
RAC Arcadengebouw – lokaal 3063
B-1010 Brussel
Tel.: 32-2-210.51.36
Telefax: 32-2-210.53.72
National contribution: joint responsibility

Ministerium der deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft
Agentur Eurydice / Agentur für Europäische Programme
Gospertstrasse 1-5
B-4700 Eupen
Tel.: 32-87-55.38.78
Telefax: 32-87-55.77.16
National contribution: joint responsibility

DANMARK
Eurydice's Informationskontor i Danmark
Undervisningsministeriet
Frederiksholms Kanal 21
DK-1220 København K
Tel.: 45-33-92.52.01
Telefax: 45-33-92.55.27
National contribution: joint responsibility

BUNDESREPUBLIK DEUTSCHLAND
Eurydice – Informationsstelle beim
Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft,
Forschung und Technologie
Heinemannstrasse 2
D-53175 Bonn
Tel.: 49-228-57.28.34
Telefax: 49-228-57.20.96
National contribution: joint responsibility

Eurydice – Informationsstelle der Länder
im Sekretariat der Kultusministerkonferenz
Lennéstrasse 6
D-53113 Bonn
Tel.: 49-228-50.12.70
Telefax: 49-228-50.12.29
National contribution: joint responsibility

ELLADA
Ministry of National Education
and Religious Affairs
Mitropoleos 15
GR-10185 Athens
Tel.: 30-1-32.37.480
Telefax: 30-1-32.20.767
National contribution: Antigoni Faragoulitaki, Veronique Zographos

ESPAÑA
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura
CIDE – Centro de Investigación
y Documentación Educativa
c/General Oráa 55
E-28006 Madrid
Tel.: 34-1-562.11.90
Telefax: 34-1-563.18.42
National contribution: Rosario Navarro Bausá,
Irene Arrimadas Gómez, Ana Isabel Martín Ramos

FRANCE
Unité d'Eurydice
Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, de la Recherche et
de la Technologie
Délégation aux Relations internationales et à la Coopération
Sous-Direction des Relations internationales et
de la Coopération de l'enseignement scolaire
Bureau de l'information sur les systèmes éducatifs et
la reconnaissance des diplômes
Rue de Grenelle 110
F-75357 Paris
Tel.: 33-1-40.65.67.66
Telefax: 33-1-45.44.57.87
National contribution: Thierry Damour

IRELAND
Eurydice Unit
International Section
Department of Education
6th floor - Apollo House
Tara Street
Dublin 2
Ireland
Tel.: 353-1-873.47.00
Telefax: 353-1-679.13.15
National contribution: joint responsibility

ITALIA
Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione
Biblioteca di Documentazione Pedagogica
Palazzo Gerini
Via Buonarroti 10
I-50122 Firenze
Tel.: 39-55-238.03.05
Telefax: 39-55-24.28.84
National contribution: Daniela Nenci, Antonella Turchi

LUXEMBOURG
Unité d'Eurydice
Centre de Psychologie et d'Orientation Scolaire
Route de Longwy 280
L-1940 Luxembourg
Tel.: 352-45.64.64.604
Telefax: 352-45.45.44
National contribution: joint responsibility

NEDERLAND
Eurydice Eenheid Nederland
Bibliotheek en Documentatie
Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschappen
Postbus 25000 – Europaweg 4
Station 333 Kamer H150
2700 LZ Zoetermeer
Nederland
Tel.: 31-79-323.35.02
Telefax: 31-79-323.48.23
National contribution: joint responsibility

ÖSTERREICH
Bundesministerium für Unterricht und
kulturelle Angelegenheiten
Abt. I/6b
Minoritenplatz 5
A-1014 Wien
Tel.: 43-1-53.12.03.520
Telefax: 43-1-53.12.03.535
National contribution: joint responsibility

PORTUGAL
Unidade de Eurydice
Ministério da Educação
Departamento de Avaliação, Prospectiva
e Planeamento (DAPP)
Av. 24 de Julho 134
P-1350 Lisboa
Tel.: 351-1-395.75.97
Telefax: 351-1-395.76.10
National contribution: Rosa Antunes

SUOMI / FINLAND
Eurydice Finland
National Board of Education
P.O. Box 380
SF-00531 Helsinki
Tel.: 358-9-77.47.71.38
Telefax: 358-9-77.47.78.69
National contribution: joint responsibility

SVERIGE
Eurydice Unit
Ministry of Education and Science
Drottninggatan 16
S-10333 Stockholm
Tel.: 46-8-405.17.52
Telefax: 46-8-20.32.55
National contribution: joint responsibility

UNITED KINGDOM
Eurydice Unit London
National Foundation for Educational Research
The Mere, Upton Park
Slough, Berkshire SL1 2DQ
United Kingdom
Tel.: 44-1753-57.41.23
Telefax: 44-1753-53.14.58
National contribution: joint responsibility

Eurydice Unit Scotland
International Relations Branch
Scottish Office Education and Industry Department
Floor 1 Area B Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
United Kingdom
Tel.: 44-131-244.09.14
Telefax: 44-131-244.55.81
National contribution: joint responsibility

EFTA/EEA Countries

ISLAND
Ministry of Culture and Education
Division of Evaluation and Supervision
Eurydice Unit
Sölvhólsgata 4
IS-150 Reykjavik
Tel.: 354-560.95.66
Telefax: 354-562.30.68
National contribution: joint responsibility

LIECHTENSTEIN
National Unit of Eurydice
Schulamt
Herrengasse 2
FL-9490 Vaduz
Tel.: 41-75-236.67.58
Telefax: 41-75-236.67.71
National contribution: joint responsibility

NORGE
Royal Norwegian Ministry of Education,
Research and Church Affairs
Eurydice Unit
P.O. Box 8119 Dep.
N-0032 Oslo
Tel.: 47-22-24.74.47
Telefax: 47-22-24.27.30
National contribution: joint responsibility

EURYDICE EUROPEAN UNIT
Rue d'Arlon 15
B-1050 Brussels

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